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[PRICE ONE PENNY.]



[EVANDER IS REMOVED.]

EVANDER;

OR,

A MAN'S PUNISHMENT.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Heart's Content," "Templing Fortune," &c., &c.

CHAPTER VIII.

But pleasures are like poppies spread,
You seize the flower, its bloom is shed!
Or like the snow-falls in the river,
A moment white—then melt for ever;
Or like the borealis race,
That flits ere you can point their place;
Or like the rainbow's lovely form
Evanishing amid the storm—
Nae man can tether time or tide.

Tam o' Shanter.

It was with the utmost difficulty that Sir Charles Evander could believe in the reality of what had befallen him, he thought himself in a dream, but before long he came to the conclusion that Mr. Mordaunt had determined to avenge the wrongs of Miss St. Aubyn, and had not scrupled to use the means to effect the end which had suggested themselves to him.

Not one atom of remorse penetrated to the young man's heart; he was filled with rage and a strong desire to live in order to be revenged upon Frederick Mordaunt and Lily, who were, he suspected, the joint cause of the suffering he was undergoing.

Thinking that he had escaped all danger by complying with Mordaunt's request that he would marry Miss St. Aubyn, Sir Charles ate some bread, drank some water, and went to sleep upon the sofa, indulging visions of power in a few days when he would be able to do as he liked with Lily, and tyrannise over her to the full content of a wicked and malicious heart.

He woke up after a refreshing sleep and breakfasted upon the bread and water. He had scarcely finished when one of the masked men entered the vault and requested that he would follow him, which

he did with ease, as his bonds had been cut the night before and he had no bandage over his eyes.

After traversing several passages, and ascending and descending flights of steps, he was introduced into a dressing-room, where there was every convenience for making his toilette, and where he prepared himself for the approaching marriage.

When he signified to his attendant that he was ready the man touched a bell, which was evidently a signal, as Mr. Mordaunt almost immediately made his appearance, holding in his hand the fatal box, which he extended to Evander, who, bowing with frigid politeness, having more of mock than real courtesy in it, took the poisoned pastilles and swallowed them one by one.

"You are now completely at my mercy," exclaimed Mordaunt, "and I am not afraid that you will refuse to do anything that I tell you. Come at once with me to a carriage which is waiting to convey you to the church, distant about half a mile, for which Miss St. Aubyn and her mother will follow us directly.

"Is the wedding to be a grand one?" asked Evander.

"On the contrary, no one has been invited, as we have told everybody that it is your wish that the marriage should be as private as possible, though the event has been noised about, and there will be a good collection of the villagers and farmers round about at the church."

Evander bit his lip, drew on his gloves, and preceded by Frederick Mordaunt, walked to the front door, got into a carriage, and was driven quickly away.

He had not long to wait at the church before Miss St. Aubyn and her mother arrived, Lily looked paler than usual, but a strange brilliancy burned in her eyes. She did not favour Sir Charles with a smile, and her hand rested in his like a lump of lead as they stood before the altar.

The little village church was full of people, who took a great deal more interest in the proceedings than did the bride and bridegroom themselves.

As the ceremony proceeded, the spirits of Evander began to rise. He felt that he had escaped a great

danger, and Miss St. Aubyn was sufficiently lovely to be a desirable wife, besides which, Evander flattered himself that a husband could always break the heart of a wife by pursuing a systematic course of cruelty and neglect, and that he could kill Lily St. Aubyn in less than six months, if he wished to.

They both uttered the responses in a firm voice, and when the ceremony was over, returned to the castle, which Evander was anxious to reach as soon as possible, as he fancied the poison he had swallowed was beginning to take effect upon his system, and he wanted the antidote which Mordaunt had promised him.

The journey was performed in silence. When the castle was reached, Mrs. St. Aubyn left Sir Charles, Mr. Mordaunt, and Lily together, and Evander, drawing himself up to his full height, exclaimed insolently:

"I have complied with your orders, sir. Give me the antidote without any farther delay."

For the first time the newly-made Lady Evander raised her eyes to her husband, and her regard was so cold, so menacing, so haughty, that he did not doubt hatred and contempt had taken the place of the love of former days, boundless as that love had once been.

"Sir Charles," she exclaimed, "I am about to send an account to the London papers of our marriage. Perhaps you would like to read it before it goes. If so it is very much at your service, or my friend, Mr. Mordaunt, will read it to you."

She laid a stress upon 'my friend,' and Evander bit his lips as he extended his hand, took the paper and read the following paragraph, which had been written by Lily herself.

"An event, touching in its simplicity, took place yesterday at the little village of Silver Pines, which takes its name from the ancestral domain of the ancient family of St. Aubyn's; the occasion being the marriage of Miss Lily St. Aubyn to the well-known Sir Charles Evander. No guests were invited, and everything connected with the ceremony was conducted with the utmost quietude. The happy pair will pass a few days in the lovely solitude of Silver

Pines before departing for a tour on the Continent."

Evander handed back the paper, while a smile showed itself upon his face.

"Do you wish any alteration to be made in the announcement?" asked Lily as she took the paper from him.

"I think I can suggest a modification of the concluding portion of the paragraph," he replied; "because I for one have not the remotest intention of either staying here or going on the Continent when the enjoyment of the delightful solitude is completed."

"Nor I. We are both in accord there," said Lily. Sir Charles stared at her in astonishment, and suddenly placed his hand to his chest. He experienced a sensation of burning there, and he could not doubt that the poison he had taken was working actively. Frederick Mordaunt looked at his watch, and said:

"It is now an hour and a half since you took the poison, an hour more and the antidote will come too late."

"I beg that you will give me at once," humbly exclaimed Evander. "I have complied with your instructions; you will not have me perish like a dog?"

"Certainly not," rejoined Mr. Mordaunt. "But there are some other things for you to do before I can release you from your present state of doubt and uncertainty. You can trust to my honour. I have no wish that you should die. It is my—our object that you shall live."

"Yes," interposed Lily. "You have given me your name, Sir Charles, which I intend to retain, but I have conceived so violent a dislike to you that I cannot rest until I make myself a widow."

Evander was unable to comprehend the meaning of these words. They had assured him that he should live, and yet he could not understand how Lily could become a widow unless he ceased to exist. This problem was soon explained to him.

Mr. Mordaunt placed a seat at a table, and exclaimed:

"You will oblige me first of all by making your will. There is a draft before you which you must execute. Put your name at the foot, if you please."

Stupified, Sir Charles Evander read the draft of a will, which had been prepared for him in the following terms:

"This is my last will and testament. I leave my widow, Lady Evander, all my property, real and personal, of which I am possessed, charging her to pay to Leopold Barclay, who once saved my life in the East, an annual pension of twelve hundred pounds. I have a secret grief, which makes my life a misery and a burden to me. I am the victim of remorse, and I prefer to kill myself rather than drag on a weary existence. I regret leaving my young wife, but my death will relieve her from much misery."

"Sign that!" exclaimed Evander, angrily, casting the pen away from him. "Never! Do you think I am mad? I will not be made the tool of your vile machinations. Your plot is deeply laid, but you should not have reckoned upon my too easy compliance."

Mr. Mordaunt produced the black box which contained the antidote to the virulent poison which was already burning in the veins of the young baronet, and advancing to the grate, in which a fire was burning, held the box over the flames.

"Beware," said he. "I give you one minute for reflection. If you refuse to do our bidding, we shall consider ourselves justified in leaving you to your fate. Do not be rash—reflect."

"What is the meaning of it all?" asked Evander, looking about him like one in a dream; "what is to become of me, when I have complied with all your singular requests?" adding, as his passion once more mastered him: "Oh, sir, it is very brave of you to dictate terms to me and treat me as a child, but if ever I meet you in the world again, I swear to you on my honour that you shall bitterly repent your share in this transaction."

The excitement to which he gave way brought on a fresh paroxysm, and his features were contracted with the horrible pain he suffered.

"Water, water," he cried; "I am on fire," and he looked round for something with which to quench his thirst, but saw nothing, nor did his condition extract any sympathy either from his wife or Frederick Mordaunt. Sinking back into the chair from which he had risen while speaking, he gasped, faintly: "I shall die."

"Sign!" exclaimed Lily, sternly; "you have got time to write. Do not be obstinate and condemn yourself to death when life is within your grasp."

He motioned her to give him the pen, which she placed in his hand, and he wrote his name in the required place. Lady Evander took the paper and folding it in half placed it in her bosom, at the same time signing to Mr. Mordaunt to bring the antidote.

He instantly emptied the six yellow pastilles into a glass of water which he had placed on the mantel-

shelf for that purpose; they became quickly dissolved, giving the liquid the appearance of gold.

Holding this within a foot of the outstretched hand of Evander, who kept his eyes intently fixed upon him, Mr. Mordaunt exclaimed:

"I forgot to tell you, Sir Charles, that from henceforth your identity is merged in Leopold Barclay. You are in future to be known to all men as Leopold Barclay. Let me explain: we have with some difficulty procured a dead body, the face of which is disfigured by a pistol shot and rendered unrecognisable, but this body is dressed in your clothes, and the will just signed by you will be found in a pocket-book in the breast of the coat. No one will doubt that you have committed suicide. The income mentioned in the will shall be regularly paid to you. The remainder will go to the poor."

"Let me drink!" cried Evander, whose pallor increased momentarily. "For heaven's sake let me drink!"

Lady Evander rose and quitted the apartment, while Mr. Mordaunt gave Sir Charles the glass and watched him empty it of its contents, murmuring:

"It was time. In ten minutes more he would have been dead."

CHAPTER IX.

Not Ellen's spell had lulled to rest
The fever of his troubled breast.
In broken dreams the image rose
Of varied perils, pains, and woes;
His steel now flounders in the brake,
Now sinks his knee upon the lake;
Now leader of a broken host,
His standard falls, his honour's lost. Scott.

THE draught, as if by magic, cured the violent pains which tormented him, and Sir Charles Evander in ten minutes felt himself another man; he was still somewhat faint it is true, and his head ached. Mr. Mordaunt, with the utmost coolness, whistled an air from an opera, and appeared to hold himself at the baronet's disposal.

"Will you kindly inform me," the latter exclaimed, "if I have anything more to fear from the drug you compelled me to take?"

"Nothing whatever. You are now perfectly safe, but I cannot permit you to leave the castle yet," replied Mr. Mordaunt.

"I presume," said Evander, in a tone of raillery, "that you wish to concoct some paragraph for the papers, similar to those you have already read to me, with this difference, that this last will speak of my death."

"Do not trouble yourself about that," Mr. Mordaunt answered. "Your suicide will be made a famous event and fully reported in every journal. An account is already written."

"You seem to forget," exclaimed Evander, "that I shall have no difficulty in establishing my identity before the courts of justice. My will I can set aside in the probate court, and my marriage shall also be declared null and void. Oh, believe me, you have reckoned without your host, and I will have both you and your accomplice severely punished for this day's work."

"In fifteen days you will be at liberty to quit the castle," exclaimed Frederick Mordaunt, who was not in the least concerned at the threatening language employed to him; "and at the end of that time you may do what you please, but I may tell you, that when you quit this house, you will be so altered that no one will be able to recognise you. Your mother and your dearest friends will turn away from you, and if you represent yourself as other than Leopold Barclay, you will be laughed at for a knave or a lunatic. At present this is a mystery, but you will fully understand it at the end of the fifteen days."

Again Evander trembled and turned pale. Mr. Mordaunt was a terrible enemy, and he feared that he should not be able to turn the tables upon him and Lily as he had imagined. Again he gave way to that species of stupefaction which had overcome him before, and he sank back into the chair, covering his face with his hands, a prey to conflicting emotions.

All at once he heard a slight noise, and was conscious of an easy motion. The floor seemed to be ascending to a level with his face, and before he had time to spring out of the chair, he found that he was actually descending through a brickwork shaft at a rapid pace. By the aid of some hidden machinery he was being hurried into the unknown depths of a dungeon.

His uncertainty did not last long. The darkness in which he had been enveloped ceased, and the chair touched the floor of a square vaulted apartment, just below that which he had been in with his wife and Mr. Mordaunt. He arose from the chair, which immediately re-ascended when released of his weight, and he was alone in a fresh prison, which was comfortably furnished and lighted by two lamps placed on brackets affixed to the walls. It had a solid door of

oak, bound with iron, which no doubt communicated with a subterranean passage.

A thousand thoughts flashed through the brain of Sir Charles Evander. He fancied that he was the victim of some new treachery on the part of Mordaunt, and that he was doomed to a life-long imprisonment. It did not seem probable to him that his wife, after advertising his suicide and making him sign such a will as she had in her possession, would ever allow him to see the light of the sun again. He could fancy himself in Bond Street in open day, talking to his friends, and explaining to them the villainy of which he was the subject. But Mordaunt's last words, incomprehensible as they were, had a new terror for him, all the more intense because indefinite and unknown.

He was furiously indignant at being so easily conquered by Mordaunt, who had treated him with a calm and provoking insolence. Evander could scarcely believe that all which had happened to him was real. Could such things take place in England during the latter half of the nineteenth century? He fancied himself carried back to the days of feudalism or at least to the middle ages.

After the lapse of some hours, the door of oak opened, and an armed man, wearing a mask of silk and bearing a tray of provisions and two bottles of a yellow wine, entered, and laying a cloth upon a table, informed the baronet that he was to be his attendant for fifteen days, at the end of which time he would be free, and during which period he would keep him informed of all that went on in the outside world which concerned him.

"Lady Evander," concluded the man with the silk mask, "has given orders that you are to have the best wines in the castle, and anything that you choose to order."

"Do you assure me, solemnly," said Sir Charles, "that in fifteen days I can quit this prison, and go where I like?"

"Certainly sir. For a short distance I shall accompany you in a carriage, but having cleared a certain point, you will be free to go where you please."

"Does not your mistress fear that I shall claim the restitution of my rights?" asked Evander, with a puzzled expression.

The attendant took up his tray, after having spread the viands on the table, and went away without making any reply.

Sir Charles was very faint from the effects of the poison, and from a prolonged abstinence from nourishing food, although he feared being poisoned a second time. He ate heartily, and drank a bottle and a half of wine, which had the effect of a narcotic upon him, as he slept profoundly for many hours after drinking it. How long he slept he did not know, for his watch had stopped; but soon after he awoke up his attendant again visited him with a fresh supply of provisions.

"So you think it possible my good fellow," exclaimed Sir Charles, "that anyone could age or alter so wonderfully in fifteen days, in a dungeon like this, that his friends would not know him again when he emerged from his confinement?"

The man did not reply, but a peculiar smile glided round his lips, and Evander shuddered with a dread for which he could not account.

"You have slept many hours, sir," exclaimed the man, "and I have news for you. Your body was discovered this morning in a wood, by a game-keeper, and a paper in which you announced your intention of killing yourself, found in your pocket, was brought to Lady Evander. Her ladyship was much concerned. She has fainted twice, and is very poorly. Mrs. St. Aubyn is nearly mad with grief."

"The hypocrites!" said Evander, in a hoarse voice, but I will punish them some day."

"Your body is to be embalmed, and you will in three weeks' time be buried with great pomp and ceremony in the cemetery of Kensal Green," continued the man. "Mr. Frederick Mordaunt will be chief mourner."

"This is too much," exclaimed Sir Charles Evander, who was at a loss to understand the ultimate object of his enemies.

He was desirous of putting some additional questions to his attendant, but the latter arranged the provisions as before, bowed, and left him alone once more.

A week elapsed, and Sir Charles was regularly supplied with the best food. He remarked that the wine changed its colour. At first it was yellow, then gray, and latterly of a ruby tint. About this time he became inconvenienced with a slight swelling of the tongue, and he fancied that when speaking to his attendant he did not talk with as much ease as formerly.

"Bring me a looking-glass," he exclaimed, on the morning of the seventh day. "There is something

the matter with my tongue, and the skin of my face seems hard and dry."

The man shook his head, saying:

"Mr. Mordaunt has especially forbidden me to give you a looking-glass."

"Why?" ejaculated Sir Charles.

"That's his business."

"Can you explain why the colour of my wine is changed?"

"I am not able to give you any information on that point, sir," answered the attendant.

This reticence on the part of his gaoler terribly alarmed Evander, who became more and more convinced that he was destined to again feel the effects of the vengeance of Mr. Mordaunt and Lily, and that this time they would be lasting; but no feeling of regret entered his breast. He was not sorry for his heartlessness. He was only angry because he was rendered powerless, and could not revenge himself upon his enemies.

CHAPTER X.

The day spring brings not joy to me,
The moon it whispers not of peace;
But, oh! when darkness robes the heavens,
My woes are mix'd with joy. *White.*

THE uneasy feeling which had taken possession of his tongue, and which had caused Sir Charles Evander so much uneasiness, increased day by day, until he feared that he would be attacked by total paralysis. He spoke with difficulty and suffered some pain.

It was with intense relief that he hailed the advent of the fifteenth day. Towards the evening his attendant came to him and told him that a carriage would be at his service in an hour's time to take him some distance in any direction he wished to go.

"What large town is there near this spot?" enquired Sir Charles.

"Carlisle," replied the attendant.

"Very well, drive me in that direction. I will take train there and proceed to London."

The attendant bowed and went away. When he returned he handed a pocket-handkerchief to Sir Charles, which was marked in one corner "Leopold Barclay," and he informed him that an outfit which he had procured for him and placed in two portmanteaus was entirely marked in the same manner. In effect Sir Charles on reaching the carriage found the name printed on his luggage, and even on the handle of an umbrella.

It was evidently determined that he should be known as Leopold Barclay, but he smiled to himself as he thought that he should be able to turn the tables when he arrived in London, and had an interview with his solicitor.

"Everything is ready, Mr. Barclay," said the man.

"Why do you call me by that name?" asked Evander, angrily.

"Because that is how you will be addressed in future. I have a cheque for your first year's income to give you. It is made payable to Mr. Leopold Barclay."

Evander smiled and said nothing; he was indulging visions of revenge in the future, and he was content to undergo a few more humiliations in the present. His gaoler conducted him through an underground passage to a gate which allowed them to emerge in the garden of the castle, thence they traversed, and at a door opening upon the high road, they found a carriage waiting for them. It was quite dark. Sir Charles entered first, and his companion took a seat by his side.

Evander tried to smoke a cigar, but his tongue pained him; he endeavoured to talk, but he could not converse with any pleasure, and eventually he fell asleep.

When he awoke it was broad daylight, and the carriage was still travelling rapidly towards the south. He tried to speak to his attendant, but only succeeded in a stammering way, and he ventured to enquire the cause of the peculiar sensation of which he was the subject.

"In a week's time you will not be able to speak at all," returned the attendant. "The different coloured wines which you have been taking have had the effect of altering you in more respects than one."

"But my friends will know me again?"

"I very much doubt it. Judge for yourself," said the attendant.

As he spoke, he produced a looking-glass which he had concealed under the seat, and which he gave to Sir Charles Evander, who held it up and gazed into it. His face indicated the most profound amazement, and with a cry of horror he allowed the glass to fall to the floor of the carriage, while the attendant looked on with a smile of combined satisfaction and pity.

Sir Charles Evander perceived in the glass the face of a man who was yellow as amber, whose skin was dry and shrivelled like that of one who had been long under an eastern sun. Here and there were blue

spots. The eyes had lost their colour, and were heavy and bloodshot.

This face was his own.

Overwhelmed with stupefaction he endeavoured to speak, but his voice was more hoarse than before.

"Mr. Barclay," said the attendant, who was once more pitiless as a remorseless fate; "you are effectually changed, and I think you will agree with me that your dearest friends will not recognise you. Your malady is one well known among the Malays, which has been produced by a skilful admixture and administration of vegetable poisons given to you in the wines you have lately imbibed. You will suffer no pain, and you can if you like live to be an old man. You are no longer the seductive Sir Charles Evander. No one will recognise in the hideous Leopold Barclay the handsome young man who broke the heart of Miss St. Aubyn. The tongue that knew so well how to lie will be dumb for ever. But we are now near Carlisle, and it is time for us to part."

The attendant handed Sir Charles a cheque for twelve hundred pounds, as well as some ready money, and stopping the carriage, alighted, and before the vehicle had proceeded on its way again, he removed his mask and bowed with mock humility.

"Mordaunt!" ejaculated Evander.

His gaoler had been none other than Frederick Mordaunt, who, by concealing his face and disguising his voice, had contrived to pass undiscovered. Sir Charles was nearly maddened at the thought of the triumph of his enemy, and that he should have from day to day gloated over his misery, and enjoyed his ever-increasing distress.

The next moment the carriage was flying along the road, and Sir Charles was hurried on towards the great metropolis.

At Carlisle he took the train to London, and trembled with vexation when he saw people turn from his disfigured countenance with disgust and look at him as if he had been leprous and unclean.

What could he do?

Frederick Mordaunt had, with fiendish malignity and devilish ingenuity, succeeded in rendering him so altered and so hideous that assuredly no one who had known him before could recognise him again.

He determined, after long consideration, to assume the name which had been given him, and take up his abode at the Clarendon Hotel, where he could represent himself as an Anglo-Indian, and have recourse to all the cleverest doctors in London, some one of whom might perhaps cure him of his malady.

At the hotel in Bond Street he, on his arrival, gave the name of Mr. Leopold Barclay, and after dinner, ensconcing himself in an arm-chair, reflected upon the disadvantages of his position. He would much rather be known as Mr. Barclay than as Sir Charles Evander until he was restored to his former condition. Now he was an object of loathing and aversion, but he believed it within the power of medical science to overcome the alteration which had been effected in his appearance.

He consulted all the doctors in London of any celebrity, and with one result. They were divided in opinion as to the cause of his malady, but not one of them was able to suggest any means of curing him. The general expression of opinion was that he was a Hindoo, and that his complexion was perfectly natural.

Disappointed with the general apathy with which his case was received, Sir Charles Evander bethought himself of Dr. Roy, who he knew had been much abroad, and who was an extraordinary man in more ways than one. He enquired for him at the hotel at which he knew he stopped and was informed that he had gone on the Continent, but where he had gone and when he would return was more than they could inform him.

On receiving this intelligence he was in despair and for several days he did not venture out of his apartments. One day on the staircase of the hotel, he met a mulatto, who regarded him curiously. The next day they met again, as well as on the one following. This time the Indian addressed Sir Charles, saying:

"You have been in India?"

"Never," replied Evander.

The Indian laughed, and continued:

"Will you tell me how long your skin has been in the condition in which I see it?"

"About a week."

The Indian shrugged his shoulders and seemed annoyed, but he answered:

"You cannot deceive me. I am convinced that you have been in India, and that the Thugs have made you a prisoner and poisoned you with an infusion made from the leaf of the Tuba. You should have remained in India, for no one will cure you in London, if I except one man."

Evander's heart leaped in his breast.

"His name?" he cried eagerly.

"Dr. Roy is his name," answered the Indian. "I

know him very well at Madras, and he has the secret of the antidote to most of our vegetable poisons. Good day, sir; take my advice, either seek Dr. Roy or return to India. Good day."

Evander thanked the Indian for his communication and determined to find Dr. Roy without any farther delay.

The newspapers informed him that he himself was dead, and that his body would be interred with great splendour in London in a week's time.

He resolved to attend his own funeral, but as he had a few days to spare he started for Dover, intending to go to Paris in order to make enquiries respecting Dr. Roy, who was his only hope.

To his surprise, as he was entering the Lord Warden Hotel at Dover, he encountered in the vestibule the very man of whom he was in search.

He made a great effort to speak. It was with difficulty that he had made the Indian comprehend him, and their conversation had been painful and slow, but he contrived to exclaim:

"Do you not know me?"

The doctor shrugged his shoulders, and looked at him as if he were a perfect stranger.

"My good Doctor Roy," continued Evander, "I am in search of you. I am the young man you took such an interest in—Sir Charles Evander. Do not turn away and refuse to believe me because I am scarcely articulate and my face is hideously altered."

Dr. Roy again looked at him steadily, and said:

"Your face has the features of Sir Charles, but I see by the papers that he is dead, and your voice is not that of my old friend, Sir Charles Evander. I am afraid you are some impostor."

"Mr. Leopold Barclay's luggage," said a porter at the door.

"This is the gentleman," said a waiter; "that is the name he has given."

Dr. Roy looked still more suspiciously at Evander, whose stammering was so constant and his agitation so great that he could scarcely make himself understood.

(To be continued.)

THE BIRTH MARK.

CHAPTER XXV.

DIEGO GOMEZ, who was standing in the door-way, would have attempted to resist the rush of the madman, had his attention not been absorbed in watching the features of the duke, as he feared lest this excitement might precipitate a return of his malady.

The madman rushed by Diego and halted only when he reached the centre of the room. Then he paused and rolled his wild-looking eyes around him.

"The wedding guests are all here!" he said, laughing with mad glee. "All here. You expected me? my friends? I have been delayed five thousand and one years! Darling, we are in your house. Come, let us be married before they separate us again. Can you stand, I am very tired, my Laura, for I have carried you twelve thousand and three long miles."

He allowed Rosa Baetta to stand upon the floor, and as she glanced around she saw Zaretta, who at that instant recognised her also.

They sprang into each other's arms, with exclamations of joy, and the delighted madman dropped his hands.

"Kiss and embrace all our dear friends, my Laura!" he cried. "We have travelled from the moon and around the planets in escaping from the evil one. But who killed the evil one with the water pitcher? eh? I did it! Mad Jack did that."

With this he began to dance as if his legs, like his brain, had gone raving mad.

"I am sorry that I have no more handcuffs," said Mr. Flaybank. "This gentl-man needs a pair."

As he spoke, Count Rocco, Leonto and the secretary hurried into the room.

Leonto sprang forward to embrace Zaretta, but Count Rocco retained him, saying:

"Remember! She may be your sister."

"His sister!" exclaimed Rosa Baetta, facing the count. "She is not the sister of Lord Leonto, sir. She is the daughter of Ferdinand, Duke D'Ossiri."

"Ah," cried Pedro Diaz. "Do I hear the voice of Rosa Baetta? Curses upon the woman that made me blind! Is Rosa Baetta present?"

"Yes, Pedro Diaz," replied Rosa Baetta, loudly.

"I am present, and I declare that this maiden is the Countess Perdita, whom Inez De Parma stole from the Ossiri palace in Madrid. You substituted another child for her in the house of Inez de Parma, and carried the infant countess to Italy. I followed you afterwards and in time fled from you with the child of the duke. This is that child. I swear it by all the hopes of salvation."

"Then who is this maiden?" said the duchess, advancing and leading Carola forward. "She is called

Carola, and Inez De Parma declares that she is my daughter."

"Great heaven! The duchess!" exclaimed Rosa Baetta, falling on her knees, as she recognised the wife of the duke. "Pardon! my lady! Pardon, I restore to you your child. This maiden, Zaretta, is the Countess Perdita. Ah, there upon the table are the proofs which I gave to the lawyer—"

"Do not dare to ask my pardon until you declare who this maiden is. If there be a substitution of infants in the house of Inez De Parma, you must know the name of the child and its parentage," said the duchess.

"I will tell you, my lady," said Pedro Diaz. "I said that Carola, the brave girl who helped me—I said and I swore that she was the lost daughter of the Duke D'Ossiri. I lied, and I will tell you why I lied. I expected to be imprisoned, and that my only chance to reward the brave Carola was then, to swear to what Inez De Parma believes—that Carola is the same infant stolen by her from the Ossiri palace. But Carola is not that infant. I did substitute another infant. Rosa Baetta has not lied. I saw the infant which Inez de Parma stole—that is, the Countess Perdita—many times after Rosa Baetta had fled from me with her, for I pursued them for years, hoping to recover possession of the young countess, and make gold with what I knew. I saw that child, grown to womanhood, riding in a carriage with Rosa Baetta to-day. I pursued, but lost sight of them; yet I learned that her present name is Zaretta."

"And the other—the child whom Inez de Parma supposed to be my child?" demanded the duchess.

"Is Princess Beatrice, daughter of Count Rocco Prince of Algarie," replied Pedro.

"Then you lied, villain, in that note in which you said that my child's body could be found in the lake near my palace?" cried Count Rocco, grasping Pedro's throat.

"Ho! Are you here, my lord?" said Pedro hoarsely. "Curses upon the woman who made me blind! Yes, I lied. I cast the body of an infant that had died—the child of a beggar, who sold it to me for a few ducats—I cast that body into the lake to torture your heart. I had other purposes in view than mere revenge upon you for your persecution. Fortune was against me. I lost sight of Inez de Parma after her departure from France, and I lost Rosa Baetta. Carola is your child. Zaretta is the child of the duke."

The madman had continued to dance until his eyes fell upon the pale face of Inez de Parma. "She cared little for all that was going on, for she felt the poison gradually seizing upon her vitals."

Her course was nearly run, and it mattered nothing to her who was the duke's or who was the prince's daughter. The poison was not so painless in doing its work of death as she had believed. Great beads of agony stood upon her brow, and her lips were livid from internal torture.

But, as the eyes of the madman rested upon her face, he paused in his maniac dance, and stared at her while Pedro was speaking.

"I have been deceived!" shouted the madman.

"You are my Laura? You are Laura Farnall!"

He rushed to her and covered her face with mad kisses. She screamed and shrieked, and Kampton dealt the maniac a tremendous blow, and the madman grasped him around the neck and twisted his head with dreadful force.

"You would rob me of my bride!" cried the madman—"of my Laura! Then die!"

He had the strength of a giant, and it was doubled by his madness. He exerted all that strength, and ere the spectators could loosen his maniac grasp he had broken Robert Kampton's neck. The snap of the dislocated vertebrae of the miserable man was plainly audible to all.

Kampton sank to the floor, dead, at the feet of his dying mother.

She strove to rise, to kneel by his side, and fell forward upon her face, exclaiming in a faint voice:

"He is my son, and yours, Pedro Diaz."

In another moment she had gasped her last, and so passed from earth the evil souls of Inez De Parma and her son.

The madman, leaping and raving, had easily shaken off those who sought to retain him, and shouting:

"I'll go for the priest, the minister, Jasper Reel, and we will have the wedding in spite of all the fiends in and on and under the earth," darted from the house.

He was not seen again until the following morning, when he was found dead in the room of Jasper Reel.

It appeared that he had leaped into the room through the window, as the shutters were found open, and doubtless he died from exhaustion and over exertion very soon after he had leaped in. Some

thought he had ruptured a vital bloodvessel, as much blood had flowed from his mouth.

There was another dreadful sight in that room of Jasper Reel's, seen by those who first entered on the following morning.

There was a gibbering, idiotic man, crouched upon the sofa, and staring at the corpse of the madman. That idiot, smitten by the hand of avenging heaven, was John Cleaver, junior.

When he awoke from his drunken sleep, as the sun began to rise, his first glances recognised the dead body of his father, and his terror acting upon a mind enfeebled by strong drink, and shattered by the fact that he had squandered all for which he had become a paricide, made him a wretched idiot, and such he remained to the day of his death, years afterwards.

Our story may now be closed in a few words.

Close and careful investigation, which was jointly carried on by the reconciled duke and prince for several months, during which Rosa Baetta guided them upon the track of all her wanderings, finally made it perfectly clear that Zaretta was the lost child of the duke and duchess, and Carola the daughter of Count Rocco.

Long before that decision was reached, however, the two maidens had become doubly endeared to their parents, and the duchess had learned to love Zaretta as fondly, more fondly than she had believed she could love Carola.

No return of his mental malady ever again darkened the mind of the duke, for the presence of his daughter, the beautiful Zaretta, or—as by right she was—the Countess Perdita, and within a year of the death of Inez de Parma, duchess and wife of Duke Leonto, always cheered his heart.

Count Rocco found that it would be useless to oppose the wishes of Carola, Princess Beatrice, for she had grown to womanhood in the land of independent thought; and as he saw that her happiness depended upon her union with Alfred Raymond, he consented to the marriage, upon the condition that they should live with him in Italy.

A true lover will follow his mistress the wide world over, and Alfred became the happy husband of the princess, and still lives in Italy.

James Raymond recovered from the wound inflicted by Kampton, but for many years was subject to periods of mental darkness, like those he had indirectly aided to inflict upon the Duke D'Ossiri, and died a few years ago at the Italian residence of his son.

Rosa Baetta was forgiven, but did not live long after her return to Spain, where she entered a convent and soon after died.

The wealth of Inez de Parma was claimed and gained by the duke, from whom the greater part had been stolen by the wicked countess.

Lotta and Ravilla were convicted of heinous crimes and died in prison, as did the cowardly Jasper Reel.

Pedro Diaz, brigand and cut-throat, maddened by his blindness, hanged himself in his cell before his trial.

Mr. Flaybank, enriched by the duke, the prince and Alfred Raymond, ceased to be a detective of the law's violators, and when last heard of was deep in the question: "Have we a Bourbon amongst us?"

THE END.

PREPARATIONS are being made for the establishment of a North German naval station in the Indian Ocean. The corvettes of the North German fleet in those waters are to be formed into a naval squadron, with the addition of a number of gunboats to protect trading vessels against pirates.

SILKWORMS IN PIEDMONT.—The prospects of the silk-growers are described as very indifferent. The holders of silkworm seed, who last year held out in hopes of getting better prices, were ultimately compelled to sell at whatever price they could get in order to avoid a total loss. Those who bought were hardly more fortunate; the scarcity and consequent high price of the mulberry leaves force them to sacrifice nearly one half of their purchases to enable them to grow the remainder. The product they obtained was satisfactory enough as regards quantity, but the same cannot be said as regards quality. The cocoons are said to be light and thin, and the silk neither better nor stronger than it was in the previous year. The best results have been obtained from the Japan seed. The prices offered in the markets have a downward tendency, the result of an absence of demand and the uncertainty that exists as to the crops in the silk-growing districts of Italy.

THE DISMAL SWAMP.—This tract of country is now one mass of fire, and so great has been the discomfort produced by the heat and smoke to the passengers, that it was thought that the trains would have to be discontinued for a time. The Dismal Swamp has never been fully explored. Like the

Italian Maremma, it is the home of a deadly malaria, and on this account has long been the refuge of murderers and outlaws, and, before the war, was the favourite haunt of fugitive slaves, though it is likely that its vagabond and desperate population was always exaggerated. The lake is in the very centre of the jungle, and is seven miles in length, but all around it for leagues stretches a thick forest of juniper and pitch pine, which is now blazing furiously. The effect of the flames has been to bring out into the open country numbers of wild cattle, black bears, deer, and rattlesnakes; and there has been some destruction of property in fences and buildings on the edge of the swamp. No attempt, of course, has been or could be made at extinguishing this fire, which must be left to burn itself out.

ALPINE ASCENSIONS.

In a paper addressed to the Academy of Science M. Lortet describes the effects, as observed on himself, of the atmosphere on the human economy at high altitudes. Both on the 17th and 26th of August last he climbed up the highest point of Mont Blanc, and, in the interval, crossed the Col du Géant twice. Subsequently, before returning to Lyons, his place of residence, he ascended several other high mountains, in order to verify his first observations on the physiological effects of such excursions. His instruments were—Bergeon and Kastus's anapnograph, Marey's sphygmograph, special maxima thermometers on the air-bubble principle, and with indices sufficiently precise to mark a hundredth of a degree Centigrade.

It appears from his notes that, in going from Lyons to Chamounix, or, in other words, passing from an altitude of 290 metres to one of 1,050, the disturbance of the physiological functions is hardly perceptible; not so, however, from the latter place to the Grands-Mulets (3,050 metres) and from these to the Grand Plateau (3,932 metres). Still, those who are experienced in mountain excursions may attenuate the effects of a rarified atmosphere by keeping down the head to diminish the orifice of the windpipe, breathing only through the nostrils, and keeping the mouth shut, all the while sucking some small inert body, such as a hazel nut, for instance, in order to increase the salivary secretion. Up to the grand plateau the respiratory motion does not exceed 24 strokes per minute, as at Lyons; but proceeding thence to the Bossea du Dromadaire, and then to the summit, the strokes increase to 36, which amounts to panting; the pectoral muscles appear to get stiff, and the ribs feel as if they were pressed between the jaws of a vice. After a two hours' rest at the top these symptoms gradually disappear, and breathing falls to 25. Nevertheless it is constrained, and the anapnograph shows that the quantity of air inhaled and expelled is much less than in the plain. The circulation of the blood is greatly accelerated; at 4,500 metres the veins swell; heaviness and drowsiness are experienced. Even after an hour's rest the pulse is between 90 and 108, and the sphygmograph shows a very weak tension and strong diastole.

The inner temperature of the body, taken under the tongue, the buccal orifice being stopped, and the subject fasting, was, during rest, almost invariably 36 deg. and a fraction; during motion it would fall from five to six degrees below that figure, except when food had been taken, in which case the normal temperature of 36 was always maintained, however fatiguing the march.

THE GREAT "FOREST TREE" OF MORAY.—A magnificent aboriginal pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) is, par excellence, known by the name of the "Forest Tree" to the frequenters of the forest of Darnaway, which for miles surrounds the castle of the same name, the northern residence of the Earls of Moray. The "Forest Tree" is 15 feet in circumference, and rises to the height of 50 feet from the ground without a collateral branch, and terminates in a vast spreading head, like a gigantic green tent, impervious to snow or rain. In summer its topmost boughs are covered with the blossoms of the white wild rose which has climbed to the summit of this mighty tree.

REMARKABLE FEAT.—Some weeks ago the junior members of an Edinburgh family, five in number, started from Callander, at two o'clock in the morning, for the ascent of Ben-Ledi by moonlight. They went up by the "Stank Burn," reached the top before sunrise, had breakfast, and whilst admiring the splendid view the oldest of the boys, eighteen years of age, expressed a desire to ascend the still higher hill of Ben-More, towering above them. He forthwith descended Ben-Ledi by the west side, walked to Ben-More, about fourteen miles, reached the summit, 3,800 feet, and returned to Callander at nine o'clock—i.e., nineteen hours from the time of his leaving.



[ONLY ONE PASSENGER.]

MISS MARCHMONT'S ROMANCE.

"MOTHER!" exclaimed Julia Green, "why is it that Miss Marchmont always wears that horrid brown silk? I declare I'm really distressed with seeing it so often."

Mrs. Greene looked a mild reproof at her daughter before she replied.

"Miss Marchmont has a reason for wearing the garment you affect to despise, Julia; and if you two creatures can keep quiet long enough to listen, I will tell you something of Helen Marchmont's life history."

The grave manner of Mrs. Greene checked our gaiety; we drew our chairs to her side and begged her to begin at once.

"Seventeen years ago," she proceeded, "Helen Marchmont and I were schoolmates. We were reared amid the brown hills of Hampshire. Two old gray farm-houses held our childhood; and the long stretch of meadow land on the banks of the Itchen was our play-ground. We were very gay and happy in those days, and as we grew to girlhood, like Julia there, we entertained a profound horror for old maids."

"At sixteen, Helen was the belle of the village, the liveliest at all our merry-makings, and the admired of both old and young. Indeed, in my whole life, I have seldom seen one more beautiful than Helen Marchmont, at the time of which I speak. Traces of her loveliness yet remain, but so marred by years and sorrow that few who knew her then would recognise her in the pale sad woman of to-day. She was three years my junior, and was greatly my superior in intellect as well as beauty. But her spirit was even more beautiful than her person. Had her face been unattractive, a stranger would have been insensibly drawn towards her by the sweetness of her voice and the gentleness of her demeanour. Did you

ever think, my dear girls, that there are those whom the world calls plain and unlovely, set apart of Heaven—which seeth not as man sees—as the objects of its especial love and care? The soul is the true index of beauty, and I have much pleasure in thinking that in heaven all will be merged in eternal beauty and youth."

"Before Helen was seventeen she had many offers of marriage from young men highly esteemed by her friends, but she encouraged them not; her whole affections were given to Arthur Richardson—the only son of a poor widow, who resided in our vicinity. Arthur was well worthy of the distinction bestowed upon him by the village belle, for a nobler hearted fellow never existed; but he was the child of poverty, and with this meagre patrimony he inherited a pride as haughty as that of a crowned prince."

"He loved the peerless Helen with his whole soul, but he could not brook the idea of taking her from a home of comfort, if not of luxury, to the life of toil and poverty which lay spread out before him. Many and fierce were the struggles between love and reason; but his pride conquered every other feeling, and it all ended in his espousing the resolution of going to sea."

"A brother of his dead father was largely engaged in the India trade, and this uncle gave him the offer of a supercargo's situation on board a merchant vessel which traded between London and Singapore. It was very hard to leave his widowed mother to her loneliness; very hard to part with his fair Helen; but young Richardson had before him the prospect of carving his way to fortune, and the thought of what should come afterwards buoyed him up through the solemn parting. His heart was full, but he left his native village without a sigh or a tear."

"Helen was very grave and quiet for some months after his departure, but soon her naturally sunny disposition emerged from the cloud, and again she

was the life and pride of the village. Arthur had been absent two years; and one fine September morning as Helen and I were picking over the ripe black-berries we had gathered on the mountain the previous day, the yard gate opened hurriedly, and in another moment Helen was in the arms of her lover. He had returned for a brief visit of ten days; then he was to go away once more, to be absent eighteen months only, and then—the happy blush on Helen's cheek spoke eloquently of what would take place then."

"While he had been away Arthur had prospered; already he had quite a little fortune invested in trade; a little more of successful labour, and he would give Helen a home of luxury, and gratify her every wish. The morning of his departure arrived. Helen was very sad, but calm and hopeful. She doubted not his return; she had faith to believe that all would be well. When he came to bid her farewell, he put into her hand a package, saying:

"Dear Helen, I want you to wear this, to please me. It is my choice, for it is just the colour of your own bright hair. And some serene Sabbath day I shall come home to find my darling in the dress I brought her from beyond the sea."

"And folding her to his bosom with many a passionate kiss, Arthur Richardson went away once more. When Helen opened the packet, she found amid the folds of tissue paper a piece of soft, glistening, brown India satin. She laid it away carefully; and although I often questioned her as to when it was to make its appearance in our little church, she always smiled quietly, and evaded the subject. But I knew very well that she intended it should be her bridal robe, and she would not have it made until near the time of Arthur's expected return."

"The probationary eighteen months rolled away—daily was the good ship expected to arrive in port. The brown satin was fitted by the village dressmaker, and quiet preparations went on in the Marchmont household for a wedding. The guests were bidden; the bridal loaf frosted white as snow, and the two bridesmaids, of whom I was one, were on tip-toe for the festivities which would follow the performance of the ceremony."

"The Sarah Jane was expected on Tuesday, and by Saturday night we might look for Arthur in Millville. Railways were things unknown, or comparatively so, in our region, and the journey must be performed in an old-fashioned stage coach. Saturday came—a clear, cloudless day in April, and by especial invitation, I went over to pass the time with Helen until Arthur's arrival. She was flushed and smiling, a little anxious, but very happy, and so beautiful. I could scarcely keep my admiring eyes off her face all through the cool bright afternoon, and when, at eventide, she arrayed herself in the brown satin, and with a crimson shawl around her, stood by my side on the eastern piazza waiting the coming of the stage, I could not refrain from clasping my arms around her, and exclaiming:

"Dear Helen, how beautiful you are!"

"She smiled her own sweet, gentle smile, as she replied:

"I am glad of it, Mary—glad for his sake!"

"The sun set, the shadows deepened and thickened. I remember that the wind, which had been all day a western zephyr, changed to the east, and blew up cold, white columns of mist from the river; and the blue translucent heavens were clothed in the vestments of purple gray. I shuddered—Helen wrapped her shawl around me—and directly we heard afar off, down the valley, the shrill blast of the stage horn. Thus the weird sound broke up the silence of the forests, and was echoed faintly from the glens among the mountains, till to my excited ears it sounded like nothing else but a death-wail. The light in Helen's eye grew deeper—her cheek took a warmer tinge."

"Dear Arthur," she said, dreamily, "he hears it, too! I will listen to the wild sound for his sake."

"We both went down and leaned on the gate that opened upon the highway. Not a doubt crossed her mind; she looked for his coming with the tender faith with which a child waits its mother's good-night kiss. The lumbering old vehicle came slowly up the hill. The meek, white horse that led the team glanced benevolently in our direction, and then came the brown bays, the delight of the good old driver's heart, bringing up the rear."

"But the white-faced horse and the sleek brown bays pursued their way without halting—there was only a single passenger, and she was an old woman returning from a visit to Dover. The coachman's cheery 'Good even, girls,' fell on ears that heard not, for as the vacant stage rattled by, a cold trembling seized upon Helen, and it required all my strength to support her into the house."

"From that hour hope was dead in her heart. She gave all up! She looked for nothing—expected nothing. A long illness confined her to her bed for a full year; we all mourned for her as for the dead, and

the old physician who attended her pronounced her recovery impossible. But, contrary to the expectations of everyone, just a year from the day she had expected to be wedded, she rallied, and in time she was once more able to move about the house.

"About this time I was married, and removed to my present home, and two years afterwards Helen, by the death of her parents, was left alone. Mrs. Richardson had died some months previously. There was no tie to bind Helen to Milville, and that she might be near the friend of her girlhood, she disposed of the old homestead, and came to this city, where, after a time, she purchased the stone cottage she now occupies. Arthur Richardson never came back; the vessel in which he sailed was never heard from after she left Singapore, and in all probability his grave was made in the ocean depths.

"Though many wealthy and gifted men have bowed before Helen Marchmont's purity and goodness, and besought her favour, she has remained faithful to her first love. She is waiting very patiently for the reunion which she believes will take place above. And every Sabbath, in memory of this lost love, when she goes to the place of worship, she wears his parting gift—the brown satin dress. She is wealthy, and might flaunt in her velvets and diamonds if she chose, but she is content to wear always the now faded and old garment which her dead lover selected for her bridal array. There, girls, you have the story of an old maid's life—are you satisfied that there is such a thing as a woman being true to a memory which keeps her for ever from wandering after other idols?"

There were tears in Julia's eyes; and I felt my own lips quiver as I thought of the pure devotedness of this pale mourner. For sixteen years she had wandered among the broken shrines of her altars—what charm could life hold for her, that she did not cast the fickle possession away?

Two years afterwards, while I was again a visitor at Mrs. Greene's house, I remembered the story of Miss Marchmont, and hastened to inquire of my hostess concerning the beautiful heroine. A smile lighted up the lady's face as I mentioned the name.

"Miss Marchmont no longer exists," she said.

"Dead!" I exclaimed, shocked by her reply.

"Not dead, but married! and more than that—she is the wife of her first and only love!"

"But he was lost—"

"So we all supposed. But it turned out quite differently. He returned about twelve months ago. The ship in which he expected to sail to England was captured by a piratical craft, and Arthur Richardson was thrown into a Spanish dungeon, from which he did not make his escape for ten years; and then he was taken to Australia by the captain of an emigrant ship. Then he laboured incessantly to retrieve his shattered fortunes, writing often to Helen, letters full of love and trust, which, of course, owing to her change of residence, she never received.

"After three years he found himself a rich man, and without delay, he set out for England. He visited Milville, to find only his mother's grave, and to hear the tidings that Helen had wedded a gentleman in the city, whither she had gone at the death of her parents. Heart sick, and reckless of himself, the wanderer engaged in trade. Coming about a year ago to this city, to purchase a supply of goods, he met me in the street. A recognition ensued—explanations and revelations; and if you can, picture to yourself the meeting between those two so long severed. Arthur Richardson was the master of an immense fortune, and Helen herself was in receipt of a handsome income, but she was married in that very brown satin dress that was wont to excite Julia's ridicule."

C. A.

NEW RAILWAY SIGNALLING APPARATUS.—At the Polytechnic Exhibition recently held at Clifton, near Workington, there was exhibited the model of an apparatus for communicating and signalling between passengers, guards, and drivers of railway trains. The contrivance was invented by Mr. Bryce Craig, of Branthwaite. The apparatus is fitted up in the centre of the compartment of a carriage, and a passenger wishing to signal the guard and driver has only to pull a ring inside. Instantly a bell near the guard and another near the driver, are rung by means of a cord passed over a cylinder, a semaphore is thrown out from the carriage from which the signal proceeds, and, at the same time, the doors of the carriage are locked. The invention is most ingenious, and must have cost the inventor a great amount of pains and labour before he succeeded in bringing it to its present state of perfection.

THE DRAGON OF LYME REGIS.—The British Museum has lately received the fossil remains of a flying dragon, measuring upwards of four feet from p to tip of the expanded wings. The bones of the

head, wings, legs, tail, and great part of the trunk, with the ribs, bladebones, and collar bones, are imbedded in dark blue shale from Lyme Regis, on the Dorsetshire coast. The head is large in proportion to the trunk, and the tail is as long as the rest of the body; it is extended in a straight stiff line, the vertebral bones being surrounded and bound together by bundles of fine long needle-shaped bones; it is supposed to have served to keep outstretched or to sustain a large expanse of the flying membrane or parachute, which extended from the tips of the wings to the feet, and spread along the space between the hind limbs and tail, after the fashion of certain bats. The first indication of this monster was described by Buckland in "Transactions of the Geological Society," and is referred to in his "Bridgewater Treatise" under the name of *Pterodactylus macronyx*. The subsequently acquired head and tail give characters of the teeth and other parts, which establish a distinct generic form in the extinct family of Flying Reptiles.

THE HAMPTON MYSTERY.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

How stands the great account 'twixt me and vengeance?
Though much is paid, yet still it owes me much;
And I will not abate a single groan. Young.

As the fears of the Lady Beatrice had told her, and as the investigation of the coachman at the station had proved, little Fay had been carried away from his home by his parents' bitterest enemy, and was now in that enemy's power.

Lord Adlowe had come upon the fair-haired little lad near the garden gate, a moment after he had hurled back at Geoffrey Trevalyan the assurance of his undying hatred, and of the certainty of his complete and fearful revenge. The heart of the prodigal lord was brimming over with bitterness and rage at the moment of his encounter with Fay, and the sight of the boy added fuel to the flame burning in his soul. Acting upon the wild impulse of the moment, stopping neither to reason nor reflect, seeing in the lad only an instrument by which to torture the Lady Beatrice and her husband, he had caught up the child in his arms, and hurried onward to the station.

Not unlike was on his return by train to London, himself and the weeping boy the only occupants of the compartment, did he realise the full meaning of his impulsive and cruel act.

"I have done a clever thing," he concluded, with a glow of self-complacency. "They won't dare to telegraph to have me stopped, as that would imperil the secret of the Lady Beatrice. They will attempt to work secretly, as I have done. This child is a hostage which I shall carefully guard until Giralda becomes my wife and I stand again on firm ground. Ah, I have been very near to ruin!" and he shuddered. "If Lord Trevalyan had died at any time during the past eighteen years, there was Geoffrey ready to come forward to claim the estates, and leave me a beggar. And if anything were to happen to him now, he has sons to succeed him. I have been a blind, unsuspecting fool. How the Lady Beatrice must have laughed at my professions of love, at my frequent allusions to my expected inheritance!" and now the baffled schemer ground his teeth. "We'll see who will laugh now; yes, and who will win too!"

He looked towards his little captive with an exultant smile. Fay had hushed his sobs, and was regarding him curiously, a look of fear in his wide, violet eyes.

Like most bad men, Adlowe was not altogether bad. He could crush remorselessly any person whom he considered to stand in his path; he could have mocked the anguish of Geoffrey Trevalyan and laughed at the tears of Giralda, but he felt small and mean in the presence of this little unoffending child, and grew positively uneasy under Fay's steady, accusing gaze.

"Well, what do you think of me, my little man?" he asked, assuming an air of friendly patronage.

"Who are you, and where are you taking me?" demanded Fay gravely, his lip quivering.

"I am your father's cousin, and I am taking you to Giralda," replied Adlowe, not unkindly.

Fay studied the countenance of his enemy for a moment in silence. Then his brow lightened a little. His sister's name evidently brought some comfort to his sorrowful soul.

"What did you snatch me up in that way for?" he asked, thoughtfully. "Why did you steal me

from my home? Why have you been so cruel to me?"

"See here, my boy," said Adlowe, flushing a little under that childish, rebuking gaze. "We may as well understand each other. Your father and I are enemies. I love your sister Giralda, and am going to make her my wife. By-and-by we shall all be friends, and you shall go home again. But till then the best thing you can do is to keep quiet, and do nothing to offend me. Do you comprehend? If you cry out at the stations, if you try to get away from me, if you make any noise, or attract any attention, I shall be very hard on Giralda. Remember, you will be injuring her."

The little face grew paler.

"Where is Giralda?" Fay asked, in a frightened whisper.

"She is shut up in a lonely place, and I am going to take you to her. You must be very quiet if you want to see her."

Thus admonished, Fay sank back on his seat, and wept for a long time in silence. The noise of the train, the dim light, the face of his cruel enemy, all blended together in one terrifying whole, and, stunned and stupefied, he fell at last into a deep slumber.

Adlowe looked at him with a gratified smile.

"I am not quite defeated," he thought, his sinister face brightening. "All is not lost. By a bold and skilful effort, I may yet retrieve myself."

He became thoughtful, and reviewed in his own soul the desperateness of his situation. The best years of his life had been lost in a fruitless waiting for an inheritance he would never possess. The strength and fervour of his heart had been wasted upon a woman who was secretly a wife and a mother. He felt that he might not have time to woo an heiress, even should he find one willing to accept him. Lord Trevalyan might die any day, and everyone would then know that he, Adlowe, was a poverty-stricken man, with only an empty title to offset a host of debts. Clearly his best course was to marry Giralda and thus secure to himself a lovely young wife and an ample fortune. And if Giralda were likely to prove obstinate, little Fay would be a lever by which to reduce her to a quiet submission.

Thus musing, Adlowe neither stirred nor spoke again, until the train had dashed into the London station, and come to a full stop. Then, taking up the sleeping boy, he stepped out on the platform, where he was met by his valet, Haskins.

Resigning Fay to the care of his man, Lord Adlowe signalled a cab, and the next moment the three had entered the vehicle and were slowly moving out into the street.

During their progress to his hotel, Adlowe briefly explained how he had become possessed of his little charge, and learned all that Haskins had to impart to him in return.

"The boy must be placed somewhere in seclusion at once," said his lordship, when he had gained his own room and Haskins had laid the drowsy lad on a couch. "It is out of the question for me to retain charge of him. His mother will move heaven and earth in her secret endeavours to regain him."

"How very like he is to Mr. Geoffrey," said the valet, in a low tone, bending over the boy, whose half-closed lids trembled over his violet eyes.

Something in that fair, girl-like face touched Haskins' heart with a sudden pang of remorse for his own guilty past.

"There is nothing strange in such resemblance," said Lord Adlowe, flinging himself into a chair, "since he is the child of Geoffrey Trevalyan and his wife the Lady Beatrice Hampton! I saw Geoffrey to-night, Negwyn. He has changed in eighteen years. In place of the gay, laughing boy, I saw a grave and stately man, with black hair, and dark-blue, melancholy eyes that were as keen and cutting in their glances as blades of Damascus steel. I did not know him at first."

"Alive! Mr. Geoffrey alive!" murmured Haskins, in agitation.

Lord Adlowe eyed his man sharply.

"He is alive," he said slowly, "and would give a fortune for evidence which you could furnish, Negwyn! But he would not pay so well for it as I will pay for your silence and fidelity to me. There is another reason for your silence. If Lord Trevalyan were to suspect your share in that affair which made him cast off his favourite nephew, he would send you into penal servitude for the rest of your life."

Haskins sighed, and his countenance fell. If he had experienced any vague determination to right the wrong of years, it fled before the image of Lord Trevalyan, of whom the valet, remembering the

marquis' tempests of passion, stood in profound fear. "You can depend on me, my lord," he said. "I will remain as secret as the grave."

"About a safe asylum for this boy," remarked Adlowe; "where can I put him, so that I can find him when I want him, but where no one else can trace him?"

"There's the bluff cottage, my lord," suggested the valet.

"It won't do," returned Adlowe, shaking his head. "I've thought of that myself, but there's a homely and true old adage, advising one not to put all one's eggs in the same nest. The girl is there. That is enough for that place."

"I've been away from England so long," said Haskins, thoughtfully, "that those people I have not forgotten must have forgotten me. All have not such good memories as you, my lord," and he smiled unpleasantly.

"Didn't you have a sweetheart once, Haskins?" asked his lordship, abruptly, "a Welsh mountain girl. Where is she?"

Haskins' face changed. It was evident that his employer's careless question had touched a sore spot on his soul.

"I haven't seen her since I left Trevalyan Park, eighteen years ago, my lord," he said, averting his face. "Poor Peggy Willsey! I couldn't go to her with the guilt of that business on my hands, my lord, but I wrote to her from abroad, and she never answered my letter. She was too good to mix up in our affairs, yours and mine, my lord. If she's living, she's married, of course."

Adlowe knitted his brows in perplexity.

At this juncture there sounded a knock on the door. Both master and man started guiltily, and Haskins hastily covered the sleeping boy with his lordship's dressing-gown. The movement was scarcely accomplished when the door opened, and Rigby, Lord Trevalyan's late valet, entered.

Lord Adlowe stared at the new-comer in surprise and alarm.

"You here?" he exclaimed. "You in London? Where is your master?"

"Lord Trevalyan is at Trevalyan Park," replied Rigby, coolly. "His lordship discharged me from his service this morning."

"Discharged you!" echoed Adlowe, frowning. "What have you been doing to get yourself discharged at the very time I need your services at the Park?"

Rigby seemed to enjoy his lordship's dismay. He seated himself coolly, wiped his brows, and glanced curiously at the couch before replying.

"You can prepare yourself for a shock, my lord," he said, at last. "It's all out—your performance of last night with Haskins. Miss Arevalo got home from the bluff cottage, and has told her story, and my lord has raved about it like a madman! He discharged me on suspicion of being a spy on him in your employ, and told me to come straight to you and tell you never to dare to set foot at the Park in his lifetime!"

A wild look came into Adlowe's eyes.

"The girl escaped!" he muttered. "Demons and furies! What a fatality!"

He averted his face, and sat in a profound silence while Rigby narrated the facts connected with Giralda's escape from the bluff cottage and her return to the Park.

It was a wild and desperate face his lordship turned at last upon his two confederates. All the schemes of his life seemed blasted—all his hopes annihilated.

"I will not go under without a struggle!" he said, his eyes blazing with an evil light. "I'll make it worth your while to stand by me, my men. Geoffrey Trevalyan is alive, is married to a noble lady, and should anything happen, has three children to inherit the Trevalyan estates. He is lying off now, in seclusion and disguise, waiting for Lord Trevalyan's death. Miss Arevalo is his daughter. That boy on the couch is his younger son. You see therefore that Trevalyan Park is not likely to be mine—that I am doomed to a life of poverty—unless I move quickly and ably. I have two objects to work for—yes, three: I want to be revenged upon the lady who has fooled me so completely during all these years; I want to be rich; I want my cousin's daughter, with her youth, beauty, and wealth, for my bride. Aid me in these objects, and I will make you rich men."

"How does your lordship expect to accomplish so much?" asked Rigby, cautiously.

"I will hold that boy—his mother's darling—as a hostage to be heavily ransomed. I will take

the girl captive again, and compel her to marry me. And then I can make terms with my cousin Geoffrey."

The plan looked feasible to the two valets, and they signified their willingness to assist in it.

"That boy ought to be taken to a secure hiding-place this very night," declared Rigby, glancing at the couch. "I know the very place for him. Does your lordship remember Haskins' old sweetheart, Peggy Willsey? A few years ago she fell heir to a mountain hut, a flock of sheep, and a sheep-walk in the loneliest part of all Wales. She lives by herself, with no neighbour within three miles. I have kept up my acquaintance with her, and I saw her lately. I can take the boy to her with some made-up story that he is your lordship's own son, and she will guard him as closely as if he were shut up in the Old Bailey and she was his gaoler. She's a prime person to keep her word, is Peggy Willsey."

Haskins listened eagerly and with a flushed face to this speech.

"Then take the boy to her, Rigby," said Adlowe, tossing the man a bank-note. "Bind her to secrecy. Tell her a story that will neutralise all the boy himself may say."

"You may depend on me, my lord," said Rigby, resolutely. "I'll be off at once. There's an early morning train which I shall catch. By daylight, if I should remain here so long, someone might arrive here in pursuit of the boy. Do you know the Burnt Downs, my lord?"

"Yes," said Adlowe. "It's a desolate, gorse-covered region in a hilly district, full of pitfalls and ravines. There are no houses there."

"There is a hut there, my lord—the hut of Peggy Willsey," declared Rigby. "The boy will be lost in that wild region."

He arose and bent over the couch, carefully lifting the tired boy, who moaned restlessly, and half awakened from his slumbers.

Adlowe gave his confederate a few farther instructions, and Rigby then departed, carrying the boy in his arms.

"My affairs are not desperate yet," said Adlowe, with reviving hope. "The possession of that boy is a great thing for me, Haskins. To-morrow we must take steps to recapture the girl. I feel tired. I think I'll take a nap, and get strength for to-morrow."

He flung himself lazily on the couch, and soon dropped asleep. Haskins took possession of the easy-chair and reviewed the past, thinking of Geoffrey Trevalyan, of the marquis, and of the simple, honest Welsh maiden he had himself wooed, and then deserted for a life of wrong-doing. He wrung his brown hands silently as a remorseful spasm rent his heart, and great tears gathered in his eyes, and he thought with vain regret if he could only live his life over again. Yet, strangely enough, he did not think of repairing his errors and beginning anew now.

The morning deepened. Haskins slept in his chair, and Lord Adlowe slept on his couch, both as calmly as if they had been innocent.

Both were aroused at last by a thundering knocking on the door.

Lord Adlowe sprang upright with a stifled shriek. Haskins leaped to his feet, and looked around him with a wild instinct for concealment.

The knocking was repeated.

Haskins pushed back the thick curtains, letting into the room a flood of sunlight, and hastened to admit the visitor.

As the reader may have guessed, the intruder was the young Lord of Grosvenor.

He came in, grave and stern, his splendidly handsome face set in an expression of haughty rebuke, his hazel eyes glowing with a keen, accusing gaze. He swept a keen glance around him, and approached the bedside, upon which Lord Adlowe sat, endeavouring to assume command of his bewildered senses.

"Lord Adlowe?" said the young lord, inquiringly.

Adlowe nodded crossly, exclaiming:

"And who are you that intrudes into a gentleman's bedroom in this manner, I should like to know?"

"I am Paul, Lord Grosvenor," was the stern response, and the visitor's eyes flashed lightning gleams—"the friend of Geoffrey Trevalyan, and his wife and children! I have come for little Fay, whom you abducted last evening!"

Lord Grosvenor looked around the chamber in a vain quest for the little lad, while Adlowe, recovering his senses, laughed insolently.

"So you are the champion, my lord," he said, with ill-concealed hatred, "of that assassin, Geoffrey Trevalyan, and of his wife, the belle and beauty, Lady Beatrice Hampton! You are a young man to imperil your good name in this manner. Permit me, my lord, as your senior, as a man of the world, as the former friend of your venerable father, to advise you to turn your back on that unworthy fellow whose friend you declare yourself! You should associate with none but worthy people at the outset of your career!"

"If I had acted upon such advice I should not now be in your presence, Lord Adlowe," responded the young lord, with flashing eyes and curling lip. "What have you done with little Fay?"

"I have put him where he will not be found until I choose to produce him!" declared Adlowe, arising. "I will restore him to his parents on conditions. As you are the friend of Geoffrey Trevalyan, you can bear to him this message!"

"And the conditions?"

"The hand of Giralda in marriage, accompanied by a handsome dowry of half her mother's private fortune!"

Lord Grosvenor's dark eyes fairly blazed. He did not dare trust his voice for a reply.

"On the day that Giralda becomes my wife," continued Adlowe, "Fay shall be restored to his parents, and a general amnesty shall reign. I will even endeavour to soften my uncle's hatred towards Geoffrey—"

"Stop!" commanded Lord Grosvenor, sternly. "You need base no plans on the fulfilment of your 'condition!' Giralda become your wife! That angel linked to a demon! Better that she were dead!"

Adlowe sneered.

"Ah!" he said, his small eyes glowing. "I see that I have a rival. Lord Grosvenor has entered into the lists against me! So be it, my lord. But let me warn you that in Fay I hold the winning card! Your love is hopeless!"

"Not hopeless, since it is returned," said the young lord, quietly. "You are speaking of my betrothed wife, Lord Adlowe!"

Adlowe looked at his young rival with the look of a demon.

"You have made quick work," he said, sneeringly. "The lady is easily won. But you are not married yet, my lord. My conditions remain unaltered. I can, at any moment, bring disgrace and death on Geoffrey Trevalyan, for he is not one to long survive a public trial and transportation. I hold the honour and happiness of that family in my hands. Lord Grosvenor will scarcely care to ally his honourable name with an alliance with the daughter of a convicted thief. It is war between us, my lord!"

"Yes, war to the knife!" declared Giralda's lover, convinced that Fay had indeed been taken elsewhere, and that farther parley with Adlowe was useless. "Heretofore, Lord Adlowe, you have had it all your own way. Your career will soon be terminated. Your persecutions of the innocent and the helpless will soon cease. I am the champion of these wronged people, Lord Adlowe, and henceforth to harm them you will have to battle with me. The end is surely near."

He emphasised his words by a stern look, and then turning, quitted the apartment, his words ringing in Adlowe's ears like the knell of approaching doom.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

When lovers meet in adverse hour,
'Tis like a sun-glimpse through a shower,
A watery ray an instant seen,
Then darkly closing clouds between. Scott.

THE afternoon was declining on the day subsequent to that on which occurred Lord Grosvenor's visit to Lord Adlowe. Giralda had wandered away from Trevalyan Park, and from the society of the fond old marquis, and stood leaning against the fence enclosing the large shrubbery, looking wistfully up and down the road, with a vague expectancy in her glances.

She was pale and troubled and thoughtful. She had not heard from Lord Grosvenor since his departure, and fears for his safety, mingled with her anxieties for her parents, tortured her soul almost beyond endurance.

"Oh, Paul, Paul!" she murmured. "If I have involved you in the trouble of our family, if I have brought down on your head the hatred of our enemy, I shall never forgive myself."

She choked back a sob, and strove hard to maintain her calmness.

It was at this juncture that the sound of a horse's hoofs on the stony road caught her attention. She

opened the little wicket-gate, and half advanced into the road.

"It is Paul!" she murmured, her face becoming transfigured with light and joy. "It is surely Paul!"

She drew back a little into the shadow, nearly closing the gate, until she was assured beyond the possibility of a doubt that the advancing horseman was no other than her young lover.

Then she shyly opened the gate again, and stood revealed to the new comer, blushing and half confused, with great glowing eyes looking like wells of love.

Lord Grosvenor saw her, galloped towards her, and hastily dismounted, taking her trembling hands in both his own.

He looked so bright and joyous at seeing her that Giralda's heart leaped up, and she forgot for a moment all her griefs and anxieties. She let her hands remain in his close, warm clasp, she let her head droop to his breast, and she listened in a sort of delicious trance to the words of love and tenderness that sprang impulsively from lips and heart.

Suddenly she started, her anxieties returning in full force.

"You have been to the Laurels, Paul?" she said, lifting her head. "You have warned my father?"

"Yes, Giralda. I made all possible haste, and arrived at the Laurels in the evening. Your mother was there. Lord Adlowe had just departed from the house, and had seen your parents together, and had penetrated the disguise of your father."

Giralda uttered a low startled cry, and trembled as with an ague.

"My father is lost, then!" she moaned. "He is lost!"

"Not so, Giralda," said her lover, tenderly. "We acted promptly. We sent your father away immediately in the pony-carriage to catch the express train at a distant station, and at this moment he is, with Herbert, at a small house of mine in a secluded region where his presence will excite no remark, and where it will puzzle even Lord Adlowe's detective to discover him."

Giralda breathed more freely.

"Thank heaven, and you, Paul," she murmured, under her breath. "And my mother?"

"I escorted her back to London yesterday morning. She is at Hampton House. I told her of my love for you, Giralda, and she has allowed me to assist her in her trials. Poor Lady Beatrice! She has need of true and trustworthy friends."

"Poor mamma!" sighed Giralda. "Her troubles are all the harder that they must be borne in secret."

"She will go into the country this week," said Lord Grosvenor. "She has been sorely tried of late, and can scarcely bear the noise of the town."

"And Fay?" questioned Giralda. "You haven't mentioned him, Paul. Does he stay alone at the Laurels—dear little Fay?"

The young lord hesitated. He could not bear to pierce this tender, loving soul with the ill news he had brought. He had intended to keep from her the fact of Fay's disappearance, but when she raised to his her wondrous blue eyes, so honest, fearless, and truthful, and seemed to look into his very soul, he could not do otherwise than tell her.

"Be brave, Giralda," he said, gathering her closer to his breast. "When Lord Adlowe went away from the Laurels, he took Fay with him."

Giralda repeated the words, as if unable to comprehend their meaning. Then, as their full import burst upon her, she reeled, and would have fallen but for his lordship's tender support.

"Lord Adlowe has taken Fay away!" she said, as if dazed and bewildered. "Poor little Fay! What does he want with Fay, Paul? What will he do with him?"

"You know that Adlowe stands in a critical position," said Lord Grosvenor. "He has discovered at last that he is not likely to inherit the Trevalyan estates, for which he has schemed all his life. He has discovered that his love for the Lady Beatrice Hampton was all worse than wasted. He has expensive tastes without the means to gratify them. He is too much a stranger in official circles to seek an appointment or a foreign mission, even if his abilities fitted him for such a position. In short, Giralda, his life has been mis-spent and idled away in foolish pleasures; and now, at forty, he has nothing in himself, nothing of his own. His only hope is to marry a rich heiress. And that heiress he has found in you, darling, while your beauty, your innocence, and your intelligence have charmed him. He has turned from the Lady Beatrice to you,

and I believe that he loves you as much as he is capable of loving. His love for the Lady Beatrice has turned to hatred. You refused him, and I do not doubt that he expects to compel you to marry him, through your love and pity for your little brother!"

"Do you think he will harm Fay?" asked Giralda, in a hushed voice.

"I do not mean that he shall get the chance," replied Lord Grosvenor, cheerfully. "I shall have him watched, and we shall, no doubt, easily track out the little fellow. Have no anxieties, Giralda. All will soon be well."

His bright confidence went far to reassure Giralda. She had great faith in his ability to rescue Fay, remembering how he had twice rescued herself from perils even worse than that threatening her brother.

"I will not be greatly troubled, Paul, since you have undertaken his rescue," she said. "But poor mamma! He is her darling—her youngest child! I ought to go to her, to comfort her—"

"Your best place is here, Giralda," declared her lover, as she paused, with a sudden burst of tears. "Providence sent you here to soften that old man's heart to his wronged nephew. Since I have seen your father, Giralda, my confidence in his innocence of that terrible charge has become a positive certainty! He is a grand man, darling—a man incapable of crime. I love him already. How could Lord Trevalyan credit such a charge against him? The circumstantial evidence must have been black indeed. How the marquis must have loved him, to hate him as he does now!"

"He did love him as even fathers seldom love!" said Giralda. "I think sometimes that, under all his wrath and bitterness and hatred, he loves him yet. If I can serve mother better here, I will stay. Uncle Trevalyan loves me, and can scarcely bear me to leave his sight. And I love him, Paul. How I wish that papa, and mamma, and Herbert, and Fay were all here, to share his affection and to brighten his last days. He is noble and tender, despite all his faults. Paul, I fear that there will never be any reconciliation between papa and his uncle," she added, sorrowfully. "If my uncle were to die, and I fear he will in one of his awful fits of rage, and papa were to come forward to succeed him, people would believe that old charge, and say that papa had been in hiding all these years. That would be worse than now, Paul. Papa's name could never be cleared then!"

"We will hope for the best," said the young lord, encouragingly. "And you will stay here and use your influence to soften Lord Trevalyan's heart, Giralda. I will go back to town to comfort and assist the Lady Beatrice, and to search for Fay. You shall hear from me daily. Your father and Herbert are safe for the present. They can be got out of the country, when necessary, at a moment's notice. The Lady Beatrice will be down at Hampton wold," he added, "very soon, and you can ride over and visit her daily. She will be but nine miles from here."

The young lovers, leaning against the wicket gate, continued to talk of their loved ones and of themselves, and the young lord spoke of his love and his hopes, and Giralda listened shyly, every word of his a balm to her heart.

"I must go!" Paul exclaimed at last, marking the fading sunset. "I will not go in to see Lord Trevalyan, as I am only on my way home from Trevalyan station. I intended to see you, however, Giralda, before going home. I shall go back to London by the morning train, and shall call at the Park as I go. One word more, darling. I thought that Lord Adlowe, all muffled, was in the train, but when I looked more narrowly for him I could not find him. Be careful of yourself. He may mean you harm!"

Giralda promised, and Lord Grosvenor walked with her through the shrubbery, pausing in the shadow of the trees fringing the lawn, to say good-bye. There was a tender lingering embrace, a soft shower of kisses on the girl's sweet face, a last word, and then the young lord tore himself away, hastening back to his house.

Giralda stood where he had left her until the ring of hoofs told her that he had indeed departed, and then she turned back into the shrubbery, unwilling to trust her blushing cheeks and shining eyes under the observation of the keen-eyed marquis.

She walked along a narrow path full of twilight shadows, and sat down on a rustic bench encircling a large pine.

She had scarcely done so when a figure stalked out of the neighbouring gloom—the figure of Lord Adlowe.

Giralda sprang up at sight of him, with a stifled

cry, he looked so dark and fierce and desperate.

"Sit down," he said hoarsely, waving her back to the bench. "I want to talk with you."

The young girl sat down again, pale and trembling. "I have made a discovery since I saw you last," continued the profligate lord, his hoarseness deepening. "I have seen the Count and Countess of Arevalo face to face—have visited them at their suburban retreat, the Laurels. I have discovered that the Spanish count is no other than Geoffrey Trevalyan in disguise, and that you, Miss Giralda, as I suspected, are really and truly the grandniece of the dotting old marquis, whom you have so cleverly fooled."

Giralda made no reply to this speech, but shrank back, her eyes dilating with increasing terror.

"Ah, I see that you are already informed of my visit to your parents," exclaimed Adlowe. "Did Lord Grosvenor, whom I saw in the train, also tell you that I have assumed the charge of your little brother, and that Fay is safely hidden where he will not be found until I choose to give him up?"

Giralda's pale face and terrified eyes answered for her better than words could have done.

"Then," said Lord Adlowe, roughly, "you can thoroughly comprehend the situation, Miss Trevalyan. The marquis may die, and you will inherit his spare money, while your father will claim the title and entailed property. Cleverly planned. But so long as little Fay is missing, your cup of joy will have an infusion of bitterness. All the gold and honours will not bring balm to the heart of the Lady Beatrice—"

"Oh, Lord Adlowe!" interrupted Giralda, in a whisper. "What are you going to do with Fay? Do you want money in exchange for him?"

"Yes, and a wife!" said Adlowe, grimly. "I have wasted my best years in a sentimental devotion to the Lady Beatrice Hampton. Her daughter must recompense me. On the day you become my wife, little Fay shall be restored to his mother!"

"Oh, I cannot—I cannot!" exclaimed Giralda, wringing her hands.

"But you shall!" cried Lord Adlowe, his eyes gleaming fiercely. "I am not to be balked again by a feeble girl! I am a desperate man! Defeated in my expectations of heirship—made a mock of by the lady I loved—a poor, penniless adventurer after all my grand schemes—I will not endure it! I will retrieve myself! You, Giralda, shall be my stepping-stone to wealth. Refuse me again at your peril!"

He hissed the last sentence, bestowing upon her the look of an infuriated demon.

Giralda thought of flight, but her limbs were for the moment paralysed. She strove to command her thoughts, but chaos reigned in her soul.

"I have taken my precautions well this time," said her enemy, and a serpent's cunning gleamed in his eyes. "You escaped from the bluff cottage. You will never escape me again! I have too much at stake to risk another defeat. Give me your solemn promise to marry me, and I will permit you to return to the house. Refuse me, and I shall take you away with me. I have a waggon waiting near for the purpose!"

"Not even to save my nearest and dearest ones can I marry you, Lord Adlowe!" cried Giralda, finding voice at last. "Heaven have mercy upon my persecuted family, since you will not!"

"You refuse me, then?" said Adlowe's eyes blazed with fury. "I warned you! Your fate be on your own head!"

He sprang towards her with a leap like a tiger. Giralda uttered a wild shriek of utter terror. And at that moment the bushes parted, and the old Marquis of Trevalyan rushed into the cleared space and paused, looking from one to the other of the pair with surprise, scorn, hatred, and inquiry mingled in his gaze.

(To be continued.)

COUNT BISMARCK'S INCOME.—Though Count Bismarck is ready enough to impose new taxes on the people, he is very reluctant to pay taxes himself. His income, we learn, is composed of 4,000 thalers (600*l.*) as Minister for Lauenburg, 12,000 thalers (1,800*l.*) as President of the Prussian Cabinet, 6,000 thalers (900*l.*) table money, and a free residence; and if we add to this 3,300*l.*, the interest on the gratuity of 400,000 thalers (60,000*l.*) which he received at Christmas, 1867, his warmest friends need not be anxious about his expenditure. Yet, proceeds our authority, Count Bismarck has addressed a long petition to the revenue department, in which he not only

appeals against being charged income tax on more than one-half of his official income, but asks that fifteen thalers (2½ s.) which he paid during the year for receipt stamps may be exempted from the tax.

LIGHT-HOUSES.—A French writer calculated that at the commencement of 1867 there existed in the world 2,814 light-houses, or *phares*, of more or less importance, viz., 1,785 on the coasts of Europe, 674 on those of America, 162 in Asia, 100 in Oceania, and 93 in Africa. As regards Europe, the best lighted coasts are those of Belgium, France following immediately afterwards. Then come, in the order in which their names are given, Holland, England, Spain, Prussia, Italy, Sweden and Norway, Portugal, Denmark, Austria, Turkey, Greece, and finally Russia. Besides Europe, the best lighted coasts are those of the United States, which have one light for every twenty miles; whilst the Brazilian coast has only one light for every 87 miles. Of the 2,814 in existence at the commencement of 1867, about 2,500 had been established since 1830, while the power of the greater part of those existing prior to 1830 has been increased.

THE OLD WOMAN AND HER COW.—A cow belonging to Richard Martin, of Rhosymedre, was recently stolen out of a field near Plasmadoc. Soon afterwards P. C. Morris, of the Denbighshire constabulary, stationed at Cefn, was informed of the robbery, and he ascertained that the cow was taken through the tollgate at Rhosymedre, about two o'clock that morning. Morris, accompanied by Mrs. Martin, thence traced the cow to Oswestry, and on arriving there the policeman put himself in communication with Mr. Superintendent Gough and P. S. Duncan, of the Shropshire Constabulary, who searched the fair and the town for the missing animal. The police ascertained that Charles Llewelyn, cattle dealer, had purchased the cow, valued at 12*l.* or 14*l.* for 5*l.* 10*s.* at the fair, of a man whose description he said he was unable to give. Llewelyn had sold the cow to Lewis, his brother-in-law, at St. Martin's. As soon as Mrs. Martin saw the cow, the old dame exclaimed, "Cherry, Cherry, what made you leave me?" threw her arms around the cow's neck, and kissed it—the latest illustration of the old saying that "there is no accounting for taste."

COAL-MINING IN CHINA.—Professor Bickmore, in a lecture on the "Minerals of China," at the American Association for the Advancement of Science, said that coal was used for fuel ages before its properties were known to Europeans. Marco Polo, the great Venetian traveller, who visited Peking more than 600 years ago, found it in common use. The only mode of transporting this mineral in the northern parts of China is on the backs of camels, mules, and donkeys. The professor described a mine in Peking, which he descended for a mile, being obliged to crawl on his hands and knees, as the height of the adit or tube was only four or five feet. The coal is drawn up in baskets on sleds, each basket holding from a peck to half a bushel. The only covering of those who drag it up is a thick layer of coal dust. The slow and laborious mode of taking the coal to the surface is the only one Professor Bickmore saw in the mines he visited; neither are there any adits or tunnels for the admission of pure air. Accidents from the explosion of fire-damp rarely or never occur, however, probably because the Chinese are unable to dig lower than the water level for want of proper pumping apparatus. For the same reason the best coal in China remains as yet undisturbed, and awaits the enterprise and improved apparatus of Western nations. Coal occurs from place to place over the whole empire. It is overlaid with a red sandstone, and the Chinese commence their operations where the strata chance to outcrop, and follow them down at whatever angle they chance to lead. Professor Bickmore also showed, by extracts from ancient works, that petroleum was not only known, but "used for lamps," more than 160 years ago. The Chinese name for it is "Oil of stone," which, as is well known, is identical with our name petroleum.

"SNOBS" AT THE SEASIDE.—Brighton is just now infested with "snobs" of the most objectionable species; an intolerable nuisance to the respectable portion of womankind, and an ineffable disgrace to the *genus homo*. The atmosphere of the pier, the esplanade, and every place of public resort, is poisoned with the fumes of bad tobacco, and ladies can scarcely take an airing on foot without being annoyed and insulted by the leers and impudent misconduct of persons dressed in the garb of gentlemen, but with no other claim to the designation. They dog the footsteps of women who have no wish for their society; address, without the smallest encouragement, young girls and children, and so demean themselves that ladies are driven to seek shelter from their advances within doors, and are even leaving the place in despair of comfort and propriety. The marvel of the case

consists in the circumstances that these would-be "men about town"—who, be it observed, are only bad imitations of the genuine "swell" of the period—have not the wit to discriminate between respectable women and that unhappily too large a portion of the female sex who are not likely to feel aggrieved at their attentions; and they persist in misinterpreting the reserve of ladies unaccustomed to the ways of the outer world as a tacit approval, or at least toleration, of their addresses. Complaints of a very serious nature have reached us on the subject of this public scandal, which is the more unpleasant because it relates to a place to which Londoners have been accustomed to resort with considerable confidence. The season is only just commencing, and there is a hope that the unwelcome visitors may be compelled to leave before there has been any considerable influx of families. Unless this fortunate circumstance should occur, Paterfamilias must eschew Brighton with his daughters for this year, or exercise an unusually vigilant guardianship.

SCIENCE.

In consequence of there being no sufficient dock accommodation at either Chatham or Sheerness, the new armour-clad ship *Repulse*, 12,800-horse power, built at Woolwich, will shortly be removed from the Medway to Portsmouth, where she is to be completed in her outfit and equipment for her first cruise at sea.

The most voluminous current of lava which has flowed from Etna within historic times was that of 1669. Ferrara, after correcting Borelli's estimate, calculated the quantity in this current to have been 140,000,000 cubic yards. This is not equal in bulk to one-fifth of the sedimentary matter which is carried down in a single year by the Ganges past Ghazepoor.

The City of Milwaukee is putting down a kind of pavement, which is described as follows:—The old pavement having been removed, the earth is cut to the requisite depth to secure the proper grade for the surface. After the ground-work is thus prepared, it is covered with common pine board. Upon this foundation Norway pine planks, two by six inches, are laid edge up and spiked together. The planks being green, are readily sprung to the intended curve of the roadway, and spiked. The pavement when completed, will be covered with fine gravel which will fill any remaining crevices in the surface.

A NEW CARTRIDGE AND A NEW RIFLE.

The Director-General of the Ordnance and the Committee of Inventions at Woolwich have undertaken new cartridge, designed by Colonel Boxer, Superintendent of the Royal Laboratories, and called the "bottle cartridge." It is intended, if successful, to supersede the ordinary cartridge in use for small-bore breech-loading rifles, which cartridge, being several inches in length, is very liable to injury. The main principle of the new invention is to enlarge the chamber of the rifle without interfering with the diameter of the barrel. The cartridge is, therefore, in the shape of a bottle, the apex or neck containing the bullet, while the base consists of the powder, which, being concentrated more than in the elongated cartridge, is theoretically supposed to possess the property of more rapid ignition and consequent increase of force. All the advantages which attach to a "low trajectory" are claimed for the new invention.

The scientific department at the Royal Arsenal have also under investigation the merits of a 37-barrelled rifle, said to be an improvement upon Montigny's mitrailleur, which has been already adopted to some extent by the French Government. This consists of 37 rifle barrels bound together by hoops, the charges for the whole being contained in a movable breech-piece, and the barrels can be discharged singly or together by a turn of the hand. The "machine" has been found to make a good diagram at the targets, almost too good if it is intended to supersede grapeshot. The rifling and the bullets are Metford's and the charge 15 grains.

AN ATLAS OF THE MOON.—During the late meeting of astronomers in Vienna, eight leaves of J. E. Schmidt's new atlas of the moon were submitted to their inspection, and highly approved of. They are the result of nearly 30 years' study, commenced at Hamburg, Bonn, and Olmutz, and completed at Athens, after the astronomer whose work they are had accepted the position of director of the Observatory at that city. The atlas is to consist of 26 plates, which are six Paris feet in diameter, twice the size of Lohmann's and Madler's lunar maps. Nor is their size the only point in which they excel the earlier work. While only 5,000 craters are marked on the latter, from 20,000 to 30,000 are to be found on the Athenian map, and a proportionate number of moun-

tains, hills, &c., have been entirely determined. Since the disappearance of the crater, Linnæus, which was confirmed in 1866, has proved that changes take place on the moon's surface of dimensions great enough to be observed on our earth. The want of a large and exact lunar map has been keenly felt, and this want M. Schmidt has now supplied.

A NOVELTY IN WARFARE.—An Italian, called Muratori, has offered to sell to the Emperor Napoleon the secret of a composition intended to neutralise the destructive effects of the new weapons, the principal component of which is a sort of felt mixed with various other substances, and thus transformed into a compact and adhesive mass. This felt, after being kneaded by powerful machines, then made liquid, and finally cooled, will resist, it is said, even at a short distance, as has been proved by experiment, rifle and pistol balls, bayonet thrusts, and sabre strokes. A Chassepot rifle ball, at a distance of rather more than half the range of that weapon, cannot pierce a cuirass made of this material, which is said to be well adapted for covering the hulls of ships of war, as a substitute for the heavy and costly iron and steel at present employed. The felt plates, besides, possess the advantage that, unlike those made of metal, instead of being broken to pieces by a cannon ball, they yield to the impact, and the holes made by the shot close of themselves, as if the felt were so much india-rubber. We are farther told that the composition does not cost much more than the fourth part of the price of steel and iron.

It is proposed to establish bowling-greens for the working classes in Glasgow.

NOTICE is given that the Secretary for War has for distribution various sums of money amongst the next-of-kin of deceased soldiers.

The Gulf coal-pit at Chatelaine, Belgium, has been inundated with water. Thirteen colliers were drowned, and seventeen others are missing.

The Empress of the French has presented to the American Catholic church, at Peru, a tapestry-copy of Raphael's "Transfiguration," manufactured expressly at the Gobelins, and valued at 10,000*l.*

A NATIVE female medical school has been established at Bareilly, under the auspices of Dr. Corbyn and Baboo Gunga Pershad. The girl students have shown great aptitude for the study of medicine, and have made considerable progress.

CONFLAGRATION AT THE PALACE OF THE EMPEROR OF CHINA.—A most disastrous fire has laid waste a wing of the Emperor's Palace at Peking. The loss entailed is a very serious one. In the Wu-yin-tien—the principal buildings destroyed—were stored a large and very valuable collection of the books published by order of those munificent patrons of literature the Manchu Emperors, and of blocks for printing. From their connection with literature, they are the best known buildings in the palace. Their name appears on the title pages of all the Imperial editions of books printed during the last two hundred years. It was here that the famous work "Tu-shu-chi-cheng," a single copy of which now costs as much as 500*l.*, was printed with copper types at the beginning of the eighteenth century. And it was here that the large and valuable collection of works known as the "Si-ku" was printed, "the more catalogue of which, with critiques upon them, occupies nearly two hundred chapters." The disaster affords occasion to the aged secretary, Wo-gen, to warn the Emperor against indulging in fine buildings and luxury generally, when the people at his gates are starving, when his treasury is empty, and when yet two provinces are in the hands of the rebels. "In ancient times," he tells his Imperial master, "the Emperors were told that destructive fires in the palace were judgments sent to the reigning monarchs for repairing his pleasure houses while the people were groaning in poverty."

THE BOAT RACE BETWEEN BROWN AND SADLER.—A short time back Joseph Sadler, the landsman of Putney, who had been matched to row Walter Brown, the American champion, for £100 a-side from Putney to Mortlake, rowed over the course and claimed the stakes, in consequence of the illness of Brown, who was considered unfit by two medical gentlemen to take part in any contest. The public were sadly disappointed, and Putney presented little other than its wonted quiet when Sadler paddled to the aqueduct and rowed gently over the course, accompanied by George Hammerton, his trainer. A short biography of Brown is appended to show why he was chosen to represent the United States. He (Brown) was born at Portland, Maine county, U.S.A., in 1840, and is now consequently 29 years old; he stands 5ft. 9½in., and in condition weighs 11st. 8lb., having an extraordinary development of muscle and sinew. He took early to the trade of a ship's carpenter, and since the age of 16 has rowed all the best men the States have produced—Hamill, Ward, Coulter, Kesley, Edmonson, Groves, Hanking, Gilward, Tyler, &c.—and has

been seen to advantage in pairs and fours, being entrusted with the selection of the Harvard crew. He beat the celebrated Hamill three times—at Pittsburgh, in May, 1867, at Newbury in the following September, and only just before he left for England beat him and eleven others in a two-mile race at Boston on the Charles River, he beat the celebrated Josh Ward in September, 1866, in the harbour at Portland, and again in 1867 at Worcester; and on the 1st of last December started alone from Pittsburgh and rowed to Cincinnati, a distance of 500 miles on the Mississippi, a feat which he accomplished in seven and a half days—excellent work. Besides these and other matches, too numerous to mention, he invented the paper boat in which he has rowed, and in the late Civil War volunteered for the North and saw hard work for three years in the army commanded by Sherman. Of Sadler, who has been before the public to long, it is needless to say anything further than that he was in fine condition and very sanguine. The American champion wishes to state that he will not row again, having given his bond to his father-in-law to that effect.

THE opening of the Suez Canal is expected by commercial men in Russia to produce great advantages for Russian trade, and preparations are being made for using it largely as a means of communication with India and Central Asia. The Steam Navigation Company at Odessa have determined to establish a regular line of steamers between the southern ports of the empire and the East, and have sent an agent to India for the purpose of obtaining statistical data as to the quantity and quality of the articles of commerce which it might be profitable to import.

M. RAIMBERT, a physician, communicated to the French Academy the results of some curious observations relative to the transmission of carbon by flies. He has discovered experimentally that all flies which live on the juices of the animal body can convey the germs of this terrible affection. Having fed some ordinary house-flies on the blood of an animal dying of this disease, he found that the insects became charged with bacteria, and that they communicated those organisms to animals on which they lodged. Subsequent separate experiments led M. Raimbert to believe that even the healthy and unbroken epidermis can transmit these bacteria.

THE HONEY HARVEST IN NORTHERLAND.—“This year has been somewhat peculiar with respect to bees in Northernland. Swarming commenced in the end of May; such swarms going on rapidly throw off what we call virgin swarms, several top swarms throwing off two and three each. Here a virgin swarm is thought remarkable; hence this season is considered an extraordinary one in this respect, and also for fly-away swarms and queens which could not fly at all, and yet we have not on the whole an average number of swarms. A sudden change in the weather at the beginning of June seemed to put a stop to swarming. Hence we have more than an average number of old stocks unswarmed, and many swarms too late to do well, yet the flower honey harvest has been good. Good supers have been taken off non-swarmers and early top swarms, and about an average number of hives were sent to the moors at the end of July and beginning of August. Two weeks of cold weather put an end to the weakest hives, and considerably lightened the whole; then for nine or ten days we had a grand bloom on the heather and weather unprecedentedly fine, but the time was too short, for the result is, that more than half the hives on the moors are lighter than when taken there, and ten per cent. of the bees dead. Those which have entered the supers have mostly only a few leaves of half-filled and unsealed comb, emblematic of good intentions being cut short by the rains which fell when the heather was in its prime. I have heard of a few supers weighing 20 lbs. and one 30 lbs., nicely sealed. These I set down for the hives, which, being strong, filled their supers from the weak ones unable to defend their scanty store.”

MORE ABOUT FLYING.

It is one fortunate privilege of the humble undersigned to have “many adversaries.” He may not possess the pleasure of their acquaintance, neither need they in the minutest measure know him; but he can nevertheless afford to thank his foes for their constant and notorious soliloquistic kindness. Every smallest lucubration of that happy but persecuted individual, whether it be poetic or prosaic, or both or neither,—whether breaking a lance for Byron or taking a fly with Dædalus,—is through them forthwith by common consent fiercely assailed and thereby advertised, and soon made famous by their ridicule and censure; by reason and means whereof the light shuttlecock of reputation is kept well in the air (unintentionally, doubtless, because to a certain person's benefit) through the blessed and inexorable battledores of spleen. Long may such useful slanderers flourish, and so let them help to keep a man

at peace in the midst of notoriety, and of a good English courage withal, in spite of the stilettoes of those healthy hornets.

But to my brief text after this just personal exordium: “More about Flying.” Well, that exordium has some small warrant even as to our present aerial hobby-horse of human flight; for my short panegyric on the virtues of flapping has been perverted at length, even in a full London leading article, into total denial of the expediency of levitation. No one ever said this,—or meant to infer that comparative lightness would be no advantage to the flying human. By every means give us elevating power through a lighter gas, if any can.

Some sort of “tame gunpowder,” or woven gun-cotton to be leisurely exploded in detachments on a regulated-cracker system, or some exhalation of extraordinary buoyancy yet to be discovered by the chemists,—these, stored in a vertebral tunnel, with lateral tubular appendages, might well be imagined as helps to our heavy manhood (or, perhaps, better as lifters of the machine in which he sits), before and beside the potent flapping mechanism, which must ever constitute the motive-power for flight. We may reasonably recollect that no bird has anything analogous to ballooning for its elevation; feathers may be the lightest clothing, and hollow bones the least ponderous of skeletons; but anyhow, so far as we can discover, there is not only no lighter gas in them by way of lifter, but actually all accessories, even to the downiest of pinions, are heavier than common air. It is possible to buy a pound of feathers. If, then, we men may avail to help our weighty material by carburetted hydrogen or some new gas lighter, and shall add to this levitation a tireless and unlimited flapping power by clever mechanism, we ought manifestly to be able to beat the birds; and it only requires the shrewd inventor to arise—as he soon will—to enable us to do so.

Where is the Faraday to levitate our grossness by that lighter gas? Even dining tables float up to the ceiling nowadays; sometimes not without (so seers and believers have testified) spiritualised men-mediæ upon them! If there be some natural secret here (and who shall say there is not?) it behoves our Royal Society physicists to find it out. And when this is “found and made a note on,” where is the ingenious mechanician to fabricate steel muscles for our breast and shoulders, and to give us the strong but light and delicate tissues wherewith we may float on wings? Such things remain to be discovered; and in these stirring days of energy and competition will probably be caught by their predestined inventor, before the nineteenth century is ten years older. If Whitworth and Fairbairn, as consummate earthly artisans, are worthy of the “bloody hand of Ulster,” what glory short of strawberry leaves should crown the head of the coming discoverer of the heavenly art of flying? Ambition of every kind, from Consols to the peerage, herein may find fulfilment, in that near but future day; but just now no doubt we are practically hounds at fault, barely scenting, and not finding: the present cover-beater has but little help to offer, beyond throwing out a suggestion, giving an idea to the winds, and bidding any one catch and keep it as his shrewdness best can. For human flight we must imitate birds rather than bubbles, and get all help from chemistry for a lighter gas to levitate our flesh and bones, as well as from mechanism, to supply us with stronger muscles.—M. F. T.

TRUE LOVE AND FALSE.

CHAPTER XIV.

Oh, if the selfish knew how much they lost,
What would they not endeavour, not endure,
To imitate, as far as in them lay,
Him who His wisdom and His power employs
In making others happy? Couper.

WHEN Grace Atherton entered the train she noticed an old man who sauntered carelessly about the door of the station, and seemed so intent on nothing that it came into her mind that he must have some particular reason for being there, which he wished to conceal from others. However, as that reason could not concern her, she soon forgot the fancy, and would probably soon have forgotten him, but that as the train moved off, she found that he had entered the carriage she occupied, and taken a seat close behind her. He was a very remarkable-looking man. His eyes were black, so were his eyebrows, and his complexion was of a rich brown, but his hair and beard were snowy white, the latter dropping to his waist, and his coat and hat were of the style only worn by very old men. The coat indeed was absurdly long and loose, and besides being very shabby, was buttoned up to the chin, entirely concealing every vestige of linen, and exhibiting below little more than the square toes of an enormous pair of boots.

She looked at him now and then, and always found

on such occasions, that his eyes had been intently fixed upon her face.

There was something in those eyes that troubled her, though why it should be so she could not see. And when reaching London she lost sight of him, she felt a strange sensation of relief.

It was growing dark, and she was quite a stranger in London. The hotel at which her father had always stopped on his visits was the only one with which she was acquainted, even by name. To the cabman to whose care she entrusted herself, she gave orders to drive her at once to this hotel, and then, with a new sense of loneliness and desolation, flung herself back upon the cushions of the carriage and burst into a flood of tears.

“No one in the world,” she muttered to herself—“No one to love me, no one to care for me. Oh Seth, Seth! had I accepted your affection, had I returned it as it deserved, I might now have been reposing upon a loving bosom, might now have been clasped to a true and constant heart. Oh, Seth, Seth!”

Then a terrible image, one that had haunted her many and many a night, arose before her vision—a dead face, tangled amidst rank green water grasses by the river-side, rising and falling with the shoreward water sweep, its glazed eyes wide open, seeming to stare at the sky it saw not. She had seen such an object once in her childhood, and now she saw it again when-ever she thought of Seth.

“Yes, yes, you’ll take me cheap upon the box, eh?” said a voice outside. “I like to save money, I don’t deny it, and I’m too old to walk far.”

And peeping out, Grace saw the old man mounting beside the driver. Was it accident, or was he actually dogging her?

“Accident of course,” Grace’s common-sense told her; but that mysterious instinct that sometimes defies all reason, told her that there was more than chance in this—told her so still more strongly when, on the following morning, she recognised him once more in her opposite neighbour, at the table d’hôte. Still she combated the idea. The old man had, in common with many others, intended to make this small and cheap hotel his stopping place; had heard her orders to the driver, and seized upon an inexpensive method of conveyance thither, that was all; but the black eyes haunted her nevertheless.

She was too busy, however, to think much about anything else. She had about fifty pounds in her purse, and knew not where to obtain another shilling, should this sum be gone before she procured employment. To become a governess was her first idea, but she found that governesses were plenty and situations few. At the end of the week she felt convinced that some retrenchment was necessary, and exchanged her hotel for a very humble boarding-house; and now she sought for work of any kind which might maintain her. Still all in vain; no one needed her. The world seemed to have no use for her. She answered advertisements of all kinds without success. Her money grew less and her fears greater every day. But still, despite all her anxiety, Grace often said to herself:

“Even this is better than what might have been, had they found the will. My pride would have suffered too terribly, had I in any way been benefitted by money to which Adolph Bartholme had any claim—his father’s money, kind as that father was to me.”

One day Grace had been far to answer an advertisement for a companion for an old lady, who, after questioning her in the most impertinent manner, informed her that she had resolved to employ no one who could not perform on the guitar, and was hurrying home through the streets, now veiled in the gloom of an early winter evening, when one of those idle fellows who seem to have no object in life, and whose brains have apparently drifted skyward, in company with much cigar smoke, bethought him to accost her.

“A nice evening miss,” he said. “Altogether too nice for a young lady to be out alone, suppose we walk together?”

Grace hurried on, disgusted but not alarmed; there was really nothing to be frightened by, although the fellow’s manner was very impertinent.

However, her disregard of his address did not drive the man away, he came closer to her.

“Did anyone ever tell you what pretty eyes you have?” he asked. “Just turn ‘em this way, and let me see whether they are blue or black?”

And then he put out his yellow-gloved hand, and caught at her veil. At that instant a quick step sounded behind them, a hand clutched the fellow’s collar, and he was whirled against the wall, where he leaned, amazed and giddy, muttering oaths and threats, and staring at the intruder.

“The streets of London are not very safe for ladies after dark,” said a low voice. “However, I will see that this fellow does not follow you, madam.”

Grace turned her eyes upon her protector. It was the singular looking old man who had been her com-

panion in the train, and whom she had suspected of watching her.

At least he had acted a kindly part just now; she thanked him with a murmured word and a courtesy, and hurried on, gaining her humble home in a few moments. In her own small bedroom she could not refrain from peeping cautiously through the shutters. It was as she suspected. The old man had followed her himself, and now stood opposite the house gazing upon it intently.

He had befriended her; he could not be an enemy. Yet why should he take this evident interest in her actions. Grace pondered long upon this subject. The man fascinated her; his voice was sweet and low, he had addressed her as kindly as a father might. Now she almost wished to meet him again. Her wish was soon gratified.

It was a bitterly cold day, and she had been busily searching for employment. Slender as were her means, she found it necessary to seek refreshment. A neat confectionery shop, in the window of which hung tempting placards setting forth the fact that hot tea, coffee, and chocolate were to be sold there, attracted her attention, and she entered. Sitting down at a small table, she ordered some chocolate and biscuit, and was enjoying the warmth and rest, despite her long day of disappointment, when a stout and very handsome elderly lady entered. She was elegantly dressed, and wore diamonds in her ears and on her bosom. She led a little dog by a blue ribbon, and wore her white hair in coquettish curls upon her forehead. She had a high colour for her age, Grace thought, and was certainly a very charming and fascinating old lady. She ordered some refreshment, and seated herself at the table Grace occupied. For a few moments she looked at her steadily, and, as it seemed, admiringly, and then addressed her on the subject of the weather—that never failing topic when people have nothing else in common. Grace replied politely, and the two conversed pleasantly for a while, the old lady asking questions, to which Grace replied candidly. Alone in the city, an orphan, and seeking employment! It was very sad, the old lady declared, and then, with a candid smile, she declared that she had once been in the same position.

"And I went out as companion, and made an excellent match," she continued, "and have quite forgotten all my troubles long ago."

"A cup of coffee, nothing more," said a voice which made Grace start.

It was not of the old man she thought when she heard it, but when she turned her eyes in the direction whence it came she saw him sitting at an opposite table. He did not look at her, however, and she fancied that, in this instance at least, their meeting was a mere accident. The old lady, after a slight pause, went on talking:

"My dear," she said, "you are young, and handsome, and genteel; exactly what I want. Will you be my companion? I need one terribly. The duties will be very light; you will see plenty of company, for I shall make you really a companion, not a menial, and I pay a very fine salary. Will you come?"

Grace looked at her in surprise.

"Do you really mean it, ma'am?" she said.

"Should I be able to suit you?"

"Of course, my dear," said the old lady. "I've taken such a fancy to you, as my nieces, the nicest girls in the world, will too, I'm sure. You'll come home with me at once, and we'll send for your trunk afterwards, if you please. Does that suit you?"

Grace was delighted, and expressed her pleasure in both smiles and words. The old lady seemed pleased by her ready acceptance of the offer.

"My carriage is at the door," she said. "Come, my dear, let us go."

And drawing her arm through that of Grace, she walked out of the shop and beckoned to a coachman who sat upon the box of an exquisite private carriage near by.

"Step in, love," she said, and Grace was about to obey, when a tall figure strode between them, and a hand upon her arm drew it from the old woman's grasp.

It was the old man who had thus interposed.

"This lady cannot go with you," he said, in a tone which savoured both of anger and menace, as he advanced closer to the old woman. "She is not as entirely unprotected as you suppose."

"Impertinent fellow!" cried the old lady. "How dare you address me?" The old man laughed.

"I know you, madam, and understand your motives," he said. "Will that suffice? or shall I explain to others?"

"Impertinent fellow," cried the old lady again. "I'm sure I don't want to engage the young person if she has such friends as you. Coachman, drive on at once."

And she hurried into her carriage, and was driven rapidly away.

"You have made her angry," said Grace. "Oh

why did you do it? She had engaged me as companion, and I need employment so much. How dare you interfere in my affairs? I do not know you—you do not know me."

"I know at least that you are a young and virtuous woman," said the old man, "and as such deserving of protection. That creature is one of the most wicked of her sex. Your beauty attracted her, she desired to lure you to her dwelling-place. Better that you should starve in these cold streets than set foot there. You comprehend me now, I know. You forgive me for interfering to save you? Only to do you good would I ever interfere in your affairs."

His voice was melancholy, his tone almost tender. "Oh, how wicked this world is," sobbed Grace. "I am frightened—so frightened that I cannot thank you as I ought. God bless you. Oh, it is so terrible to be alone in this great city."

She burst into tears. The old man turned his face away.

For a moment both were silent. Then he said: "Will you give me your hand before we part?"

"Surely," said Grace. "Oh, thank you, thank you. If ever you are in danger, may providence raise up a friend for you, as it has for me."

The old man caught her hand and pressed it convulsively, bent over it as though he would have pressed it to his lips, but dropped it without doing so, and hurried away, leaving Grace bewildered and terrified, but thankful for her escape from the most terrible danger that had ever yet menaced her.

CHAPTER XV.

Hope on, hope ever! though to-day be dark,
The sweet sunburst may smile on thee to-morrow;
Thou art lonely, there's an eye will mark
Thy loneliness, and grieve on all thy sorrow.
Thou'rt thou must toll 'mong cold and sorrow men,
With none to echo back thy thought or love thee,
Cheer up, poor heart, thou dost not beat in vain,
For God is over all and Heaven above thee—
Hope on, hope ever. Gerald Massey.

But there was still no prospect of employment for poor Grace, and as she sat alone in her room she tried to nerve herself to face a duty which she must perform. Her board bill would be due on Saturday, and she must meet it somehow. So little money now remained in her purse that, since she had no means of earning more, the only course left her was the disposal of some of her jewellery. Her watch was the most valuable thing which she possessed, but it was a keepsake which she valued highly, and to sell it seemed beyond her power. She must pawn it, that there might be some chance of its recovery, and the degradation of the act weighed heavily upon her. She deliberated long and sadly. To relinquish the gift of a tender parent's hand seemed almost a sacrilege; better to suffer mortification, she at last decided, than to do this.

The watch was very valuable, but she could not guess how much a pawnbroker would lend her on it—enough, at least, she hoped, to carry her through a week or two; and before that time had passed, she hoped that better prospects would dawn upon her. Ah, how could we live without hope?

It is a merciful providence that gives to those who have the least in the present the most ideal treasure in the future; that builds often, even for the homeless wanderer, some gorgeous and resplendent castle in the air, farther than any we may ever dwell in here.

Before the bill was due she would, if need be, raise the money necessary for its payment; meanwhile she did her best to procure a situation. She even offered herself for positions almost menial; but there were strong women, hard-handed and accustomed to the toll, before her, and testimonials which Grace could not give were asked for, and her very beauty and refinement gave rise to suspicion. At last Saturday evening came, and money must be had, and Grace summoned all her resolution, and, wrapping herself in hood and veil and shawl, slipped out into the snowy street and made her way towards a little shop, at the door of which three golden balls glittered in the gas-light. A man with his hat slouched over his eyes was just coming out, and a woman with a bundle under her arm shuffled past him in her entrance.

It really seemed that the air of the place was in itself degrading. She shrank back a little, shuddering. "I cannot do it," she murmured. "Oh, it is too terrible!" And at this very instant a hand was laid upon her arm.

Grace screamed in terror. The place was a low one, and her first thought was that some one who guessed that she had some valuables about her was about to attempt a robbery.

"Did I frighten you?" said a voice very softly.

"I did not mean to. I want to help you if I can."

It was the old man again. Why was he here? How did he contrive to keep such watch upon her, and what was his motive? Grace asked herself vainly. Aloud she said nothing. The old man spoke.

"You are going there," he said, pointing to the golden balls. "Pardon me, I know you have found nothing to do, and I know all that poverty may bring upon the proudest soul. You were going there, and you dread the going."

"How you know so much about me I cannot tell," said Grace, "but you are right."

"Then I can help you," said the old man. "There are many money-lenders among my people. I have a friend in the next street, who will advance you more upon whatever you may be about to dispose of than this man, whose dealings are with the most wretched of the poor, would ever think of offering. I will transact this business for you, keeping your very name from other ears, and will bring the sums advanced to your lodgings in an hour. Will that please you? Will you so far trust a stranger?"

"Who are you?" asked Grace, "that you should be so kind to me?"

"Call me Jabal the Jew," said the old man. "As for my interest in you, I—I knew your father. He was very kind to me. I desire to be kind to his daughter. Will that satisfy you? I am a lonely old man, with no human being to love, or to love me, in all the world. Will you refuse me the happiness of doing you a little simple kindness?"

"No," said Grace; "never will I again turn coldly from a friendly face. Once—no matter, I am thinking of something of which you know nothing. I am excited, nervous—about a watch. It is a watch. I cannot sell it, for it was a gift from my father, and it is very dear to me. If you will really be so considerate, so thoughtful—"

She could say no more, but put her hand into her pocket and drew forth the box in which lay her precious keepsake.

The old man took it from her.

"And you do not fear to trust me?" he asked.

"I am sure that I could trust you with my very life," said Grace. "Oh, how can I thank you?"

"Let me see you safely home before I go upon my errand," said the old man.

And the two walked together to the door of the little lodging-house.

"I will return in an hour," said old Jabal, as he left her.

And Grace felt no more doubt that he had spoken the truth, than though she had known him all her life.

In less than the time to which he had alluded the old man indeed returned, and summoning her to the door, placed in her hands a sealed envelope.

"My friend has advanced the sum enclosed upon your watch," he said; "and whenever you desire to reclaim it, you will be able to do so."

Then he bowed and departed. The envelope contained the sum of twenty pounds and a small ticket, or square card, marked with a number. In her ignorance of such matters, the amount advanced did not surprise Grace, but she was deeply grateful for her self-appointed guardian. He had saved her from terrible humiliation, and aided her when she most needed help.

She paid her bill, and putting the remainder of the money carefully away, slept more peacefully than she had slept for many nights. And while she slept, Jabal, of the white, flowing beard and hair, watched her window from without, pacing the snowy pavement for long hours, and muttering her name softly and tenderly over and over again.

"Grace, Grace—Grace Atherton, heaven bless and guard you. Heaven help me to protect you, and to win some kindly thought at least for poor old Jabal."

This was only the beginning of the time, which Grace never forgot while she lived, in which old Jabal the Jew, as he was called, constituted himself her fatherly protector. She began before long to accept him as such without question. To him she turned in every emergency, only refusing any gift of money at his hands. This, indeed, he only offered once. Grace had thus replied:

"You mean well, I know; but a renewal of such attempted kindness would offend me. I do not wish to feel angry with my father's old friend."

And Jabal had promised never to repeat the offer. Yet he always kept watch over her, and aided her in many ways.

Grace did not know that from his purse, and his alone, came all the money advanced on her few trinkets, and that he had only wanted an opportunity of restoring them to her without offence, else she would not have been so content to accept his kindness.

One after the other all had gone, before, one day, entering an office where situations of all respectable kinds were procured for females, she found there a gentleman of middle age, very plain, indeed absolutely ugly in both face and figure, but withal very good-natured and kindly looking. He was talking with the proprietor of the place.



[THE BAFLED HARRIDAN.]

"What I want, you see," he said, "is a young lady who will assist my wife in every way. There are six little ones, you see, and though she is the most energetic of women, why, she can't do all, you know. Someone who would teach and sew a little, and walk out now and then with the little ones, and yet a lady, a refined person, company for Mrs. M——while I'm out, and all that."

"A nursery governess you want sir," said the proprietor.

"Well, no," said the little man. "No. A nursery governess, you see, naturally says: 'Where is the nursery?' and there isn't any. The children are all over the house. In fact the whole house is a nursery. We're not at all fashionable, and we're not rich. An orthodox nursery governess won't suit, I'm afraid. I——"

"Perhaps I could please you," said Grace, advancing. "I think I know what you desire."

And after some talk she engaged herself to call on Mrs. Mathews at nine the next day, and make final arrangements with her.

"You'll be charmed with my wife," said the little man. "The finest woman in the world! A devoted wife and mother."

And then he had hurried away, with a bundle of toys under one arm, and a bundle of picture-books under the other, which he was evidently taking home to present to the children.

Grace liked him. And when, on the following day, she called on Mrs. Mathews, she was really charmed with her. That lady was young still, and had been a beauty. She was as great a contrast to her plain little husband as was possible to imagine, but she evidently believed him to be perfection.

"So considerate, Mrs. Atherton," she said, "so kind to all of us. I'm sure I could get along, even with baby, but he thinks I need help. I'm sure I never could have found anyone who would have pleased me so well as you do; but that's just like William—he always knows exactly what I like. If you can come on Monday, I shall be delighted."

So, on Monday, not one day too soon, for the last ring was, as Grace firmly believed, in the hands of the pawnbroker, she went to Mrs. Mathews.

What a house it was! Children all over it—children studying, and children playing; one child always ill of something, and one, as a general thing, lost, despite the watchfulness of mother and governess. To go to the station-house, and see if a little Mathews had been picked up and brought there, was a regular family duty. Something catching was always being brought in by the last lost child. The door of Mrs. Mathew's room had a sidelong droop,

because of the fact that the third child, Master Ned, was always swinging on it. Often some other child shut Ned's fingers in the crack, but nothing ever cured him. Then the piano was always being practised upon. The children were all learning music. The children were all learning everything, if they only would have studied; but before a young Mathews could be made fit to say its lesson, it had to be caught and washed.

It was a harum-scarum household, but no one was ever cross, and no one ever scolded, and the affection of the whole brood was really remarkable. As for Mrs. Mathews, she was as much in love with her adoring husband as she could have been on her wedding-day. Not all the raven tresses in the world could have been handsomer in her eyes than her William's shock of red hair. No long-fringed orbs, black, or blue, or hazel, could have been so fascinating as his queer little twinkling gray eyes.

"Not perfectly beautiful, of course, but so very manly-looking is my William," she often said to Grace, and Grace would not have contradicted her for the world.

Before she had been in the house long, she discovered that Mrs. Mathews was by birth a Frenchwoman.

"And I've nearly forgotten how to write French," said the good woman, "though I can speak it still. You see, William's language is the only one I care for. My sister, however, has quite an accent. You'd never believe us to be related. She lives in the country, and I don't often see her, but we are very fond of each other nevertheless."

Grace could well believe that Mrs. Mathews was fond of everyone, and that everyone connected with her was fond of her.

The longer she lived with these good people, the more deeply attached Grace became to them; she loved the children too, and did her best to teach them. Her lovely face wore a calm and sweet expression, and she was more like the Grace of her girlhood, than she had been for years. If the memory of her cruelty to Seth, and of his untimely fate, had not haunted her, she might have been completely happy.

Old Jabal still continued her friend and protector. When she had been in the Mathews' house a few months her watch and other trinkets were returned to her. "Forgive an old friend of your father, who has more money than he can use," were the words written in the little note which came with them, and Grace could not be very angry; besides, now that she needed no aid, she would not quarrel with the kind, though mysterious old man. He very often

called upon her, and she often knew that he was watching her when he did not approach. Sometimes the fear that his attentions meant more than friendship crept into Grace's head, but she repulsed the idea as a piece of foolish vanity. "He is only kind, as my father's old friend," she said to herself. And, indeed, nothing but fatherly kindness appeared in the old man's speech. Only in his dark, unfathomable eyes—those eyes which contrasted, in their youthful brilliancy, so strangely with his snow-white hair—Grace sometimes saw a light that, by its earnest and passionate sadness, awoke within her bosom memories of the past—memories of the time when she was beloved by Seth Atherton. Then Grace would blush consciously, and wonder at herself for blushing.

But the friendship of old Jabal had grown to be too dear to be lightly parted with. Grace would not have lost it for any earthly possession.

Little news reached her of the old place, and the people who dwelt there; but once Grace met Mrs. Benson in the street, and heard from her tidings of Adolph Bartholmæ and his wife. They were fond of each other, the housekeeper said, but they were not quite happy, for all that. Of course it was not right for her to talk of family affairs, but to Mrs. Atherton it was quite a different thing. She feared that Adolph was dissipated, or had taken to gambling; he was away from home a great deal. The estate, she knew, was mortgaged, and Mrs. Bartholmæ cried often over her baby when she was left by herself. She had told Mrs. Benson that she feared the poor child would be a beggar. It must be gambling; and if that fine estate were to be gambled away, why, it would have been better that the will should have been found, and that someone she knew should have been mistress there.

Grace laughed very oddly at this.

"If it were found, and were as you thought, I might order Adolph Bartholmæ out of house and home," she said. "Suppose that someone discovers it yet?"

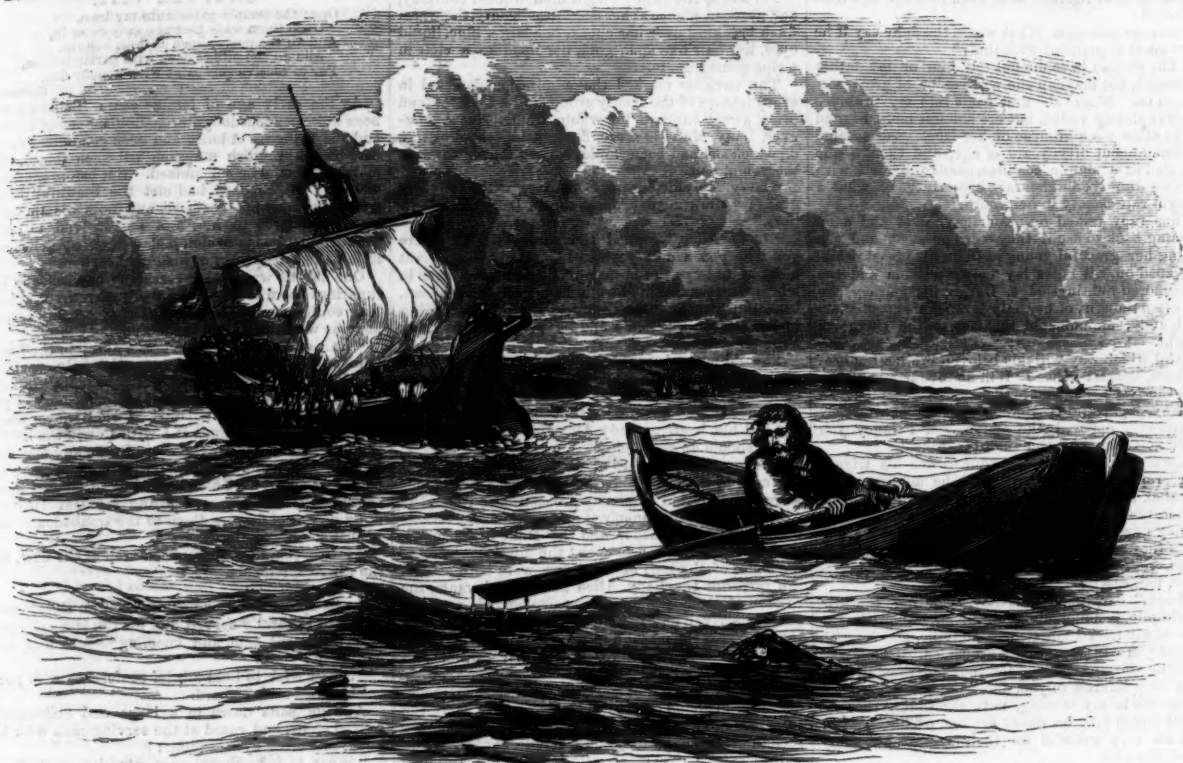
And the housekeeper had looked frightened. "Master must have destroyed it, I think," she said.

"Or you," said Grace, "for your favourite Adolph's sake?"

"Oh, ma'am, you are joking, I hope," said Mrs. Benson, a little offended.

And Grace had laughed again, and they had parted. There was a look on Grace's face, as she spoke of the will, that the old woman could not interpret.

(To be continued.)



[THE KING'S VENTURE.]

THE UNKNOWN KNIGHT; OR, THE LION-HEARTED.

CHAPTER VII.

Coming to kiss her lips (such grace I found),
Me seem'd I smelt a garden of sweet flow'rs,
That dainty odours from them threw around,
For damsels fit to deck their lovers' bow'rs;
Her lips did smell like unto gilliflowers,
Her ruddy cheeks like unto roses red,
Her snowy brows like budded bellamoures,
Her lovely eyes like pinks but newly spread.

Spenser.

WHEN Harold Courtney set off with Lady Alice from the hunting-lodge, ringing with the shouts and cheers of the marauders, as her head sank wearily back against his broad shoulders, and a low moan broke from her lips, he said, with deep earnestness:

"Do not fear, dear, dear Lady Alice, my horse is fleet and has borne me many a league in the different countries where I have lived. The darkness which now broods over the sky is in our favour, and I hope they will not discover that you have really fled from the lodge till we are considerably in advance."

The young girl cast a single glance backwards, and then said:

"I will hope for the best. Will not heaven, deliver me from being captured by those marauders?"

"So I trust," replied the young man, and after a brief silence, the maiden continued:

"My lord, I was thinking of you when the attack was made, but I believed you far away and beyond reach in my hour of extreme peril."

"May I tell you," observed the knight, "what brought me on this journey?"

"Most assuredly," murmured the girl.

"Dearest Lady Alice, it was to look upon your face once more, to gain by some means a chance meeting with you, whom I have dared to love with all the depth and fervour of my being, from the first hour I saw you standing by the window at Belmont Castle, near my own lonely home. I have felt a deep interest in you, your image haunted me wherever I went, and it was inexpressibly sweet to render you some service on the moor, when I found you lying there almost dead."

He paused an instant, and then went on in a hoarse, unnatural voice:

"How painfully my heart thrilled as I lifted you from the snow, and bore you into the little hut built

by the gipsies, for I feared I had come too late to save you and you were already dead. How pleasant it was to see you restored to life, to mark the glow once more stealing over a face whose beauty I have never beheld equalled in any living woman, or glowing out on the master-pieces of the most celebrated painters."

"Oh, sir knight," murmured the girl, "there you mistake; your language is too extravagant."

"Nay," rejoined her companion, "so your surpassing loveliness seems to me. It was not strange that you should haunt my visions; and that night after I had parted from you in the court-yard of the castle, where you were for a time sojourning—the memory of that would continually rise before me on my homeward gallop, and through the remaining hours of the night, which I spent wakeful and dreamy by the fireside of the old priory wherein I dwell. Daily, while you were ill, I went to inquire for you, and when you left that part of the country and returned to London, it seemed as if all the light and bloom of life had gone with you. Then, then, dearest, best beloved, I learned how indescribably dear you had grown, and realised that in you I had met my fate. I yearned to follow you to your home, but an imperative necessity compelled me to perform a certain mission, which took me as far as Wales, but when I came back I resolved to set out for London. I had taken care to pluck some flowers and grasses from the memorable moor, and these I flung at your feet on the day of the coronation."

"Yes, I received them," said Alice, softly, and her heart beat fast as she spoke.

"And were they welcome?" asked the knight, earnestly.

"A thousand times welcome," murmured the girl, and by a fitful gleam of moonlight Harold Courtney saw the blush which crimsoned her face, and the eloquent light which shot into her starry eyes.

"Dearest Lady Alice," he continued, "may I hope that you will one day learn to reciprocate my love—a love which is and will be the only love of my lifetime, and of whose depth you cannot dream?"

"The lesson is already learned," replied the girl.

The cavalier started, and a wild thrill swept through his frame, and his voice was full of eagerness as he exclaimed:

"Ah, the joy of this moment amply repays me for all I have suffered during my life! Oh, Alice, beloved Alice, for thus I may call you now, you do not know what happiness your confession has aroused; you have proved yourself a true woman by daring to love one of whose history you have heard so little."

"Be assured," replied the girl, "I know enough of

you to see that you are the realisation of my ideal, and believe that I can fully trust you and your love."

"That you may indeed; you shall never, never regret your trust in me, whom you met as the Unknown Knight, and who still bears this title among low and high in the neighbourhood of my old priory."

There was a brief silence, and then the cavalier went on:

"Your father has doubtless thought me dishonourable to seek to win the love of one who is betrothed to another."

"Oh, yes, yes; he bade me never to see you more, under the penalty of being imprisoned in my own chamber, or walled up in a convent."

"Ha! say you so," cried the knight; "methinks I have as nice a sense of honour as most men, and yet I do not think you ought to be doomed to a living death, and have the happiness of your life wrecked by a marriage with a man whom you have confessed to me you detest."

"Ah, that is true," said the girl, with deep earnestness. "I can never, never marry the Duke of Ellsmere; I would far rather die."

"Let me hope that no such fate will be yours," replied the cavalier; "that you will live to bless my life with your love, my own dear Alice."

As he spoke he encircled her fondly with his arm, and for a moment she was drawn to that brave, true heart. His lips again and again trembled on her cheek and brow, and all was forgotten save their mutual love.

There, beneath the October night sky, they murmured their troth-plight, and then the girl said:

"I have something to tell you, my lord."

"Do not address me thus formally, I pray you," observed Courtney; "call me Harold; I have never yet heard your sweet voice call by that name."

"Well then, Harold, if it pleases you better,"

"Aye!" exclaimed the knight, "I shall never forget the thrill of delight which swept through my being when I first heard you give me my name. And now for your story, dearest."

"Since I saw you last I have had a strange visit."

"And from whom?"

"That would be difficult to tell," replied the lady. "One evening, before we came to spend the hunting-season at the old lodge, a woman entered my lower room, and warned me against the Duke of Ellsmere."

And she proceeded to relate the conversation which had passed between her and the mysterious woman.

The cavalier listened with keen interest, and then muttered:

"Strange, strange. What would the duke say if he were made acquainted with this?"

"The woman bade me not tell him or my father at present, but mayhap she will yet be of great service to us. When she first came into my presence she was closely veiled, but ere she left me, I begged her to allow me a glimpse of her face. She seemed a woman about fifty years of age, and though she was clad in a simple costume, carried herself with extreme dignity, and her face bore traces of what I thought rare beauty in her youth."

Thus they talked on, Courtney, ever and anon glancing back to see if they were pursued, and she resting her graceful young head on his breast, while they sped on, till miles lay between them and the beleaguered hunting-lodge. During her journey, she had often thought of her only brother's expected arrival, and communicated the fact to the Unknown Knight.

"And which way will this beloved brother Launcelot turn, dearest Alice? Will he favour an alliance with the Duke of Ellsmere?"

"Nay, nay, Harold; before he sailed on his embassy he strongly opposed the match, and I fancy you would suit him far better than the duke."

"Be assured I shall endeavour to win his friendship," replied the cavalier, "for if he approves our betrothal, he may be able to render us more than one service, that we shall not soon forget."

They now rode on in silence, and not long afterwards they saw several lights glowing through the gloom, revealing a spacious structure, half manor-house, half castle.

"Look," exclaimed Courtney, pointing towards the old pile looming up before them, "there is the home of my friend, Sir George Melville, and beneath his roof you will be cordially welcomed. I have told them the story of my love for you, and they already feel a deep interest in you, and have heartily wished me success in my wooing, notwithstanding the obstacles which may be raised against us."

"I am very grateful for their sympathy," murmured the girl.

And now the cavalier and his fair charge galloped across the drawbridge, and paused in the court-yard, where two or three retainers were keeping guard.

"Men," exclaimed the knight, as a lance, was extended before him, "I am a friend."

"Give your name," cried the servant.

"Harold Courtney."

"Oh! I crave your pardon, sir—pass on."

The next moment the cavalier stood or the damp, stone flags of the court-yard, lifting the graceful figure of the maiden whom he had rescued from such a terrible fate from the saddle, and as he clasped her dainty hand, and drew her arm within his own, she looked up at him, while the light of the lamps, burning above the massive arch of the court, revealed both their faces—his dark, brave, handsome, and with a tender light beaming from his falcon eye, while her young, girlish countenance was radiant with the new joy which flooded her whole soul.

"Dear, dear Harold," she murmured, "I can never repay you for having thrice been my good genius in three different hours of need."

"Shall not a future shared by you compensate me a thousandfold for all this, my own dear Alice?" and his voice lingered musically on the last words.

In another instant the young cavalier had rapped for admittance at the heavy oaken door, which was immediately opened by the porter, who at once recognised the knight, and exclaimed:

"Enter, sir knight, I pray you," and he led the way to the apartment where the Melville family were gathered.

How pleasant and cheerful the large apartment looked, with a bright fire blazing on the hearth, and the light of numerous lamps shining over the thick curtains of crimson damask, the cumbersome chairs and sofas, with their rich cushions, the quaint tables, the embroidery frame in one corner, and the harp, over which a young girl was bending, and singing to its accompaniment a song very popular in those days. An elderly gentleman and lady sat in great arm chairs by the fireside, and two tall young men were lounging about in the warmth and glow of the pleasant room, now purporting to listen to their sister's music, but ever and anon playing with the drooping ears of a brace of dogs crouched near them. Such was the pleasant home-scene into which the fugitive maiden was led by the knight, with whom she had escaped from her father's beleaguered hunting-lodge, and now all eyes turned towards the fair stranger standing before them, clad in the costume she had worn that day—a robe of satin, and a tunic of azure brocade, a coil of pearls encircling her neck and arms, and gleaming out here and there amid the tresses, which swept in bright luxuriance around her,

For a time the family forgot their wonted courtesy, and gazed in silence at her matchless beauty, the warm flush breaking over her cheek, her large, blue, liquid eyes, her hair like spun-gold, her lips like a cleft in a ripe pomegranate.

The cavalier marked the admiration depicted in every feature of the family group, and a thrill of fond pride swept through his whole frame. Now, however, Lady Melville arose, flung aside the knitting on which she had been employed, and moved towards the young pair.

"Lady Melville," said Courtney, with knightly grace; "allow me to present to you Lady Alice Villiers."

"Lady Alice," replied the baroness. "I assure you that you are very welcome. It gives me great pleasure to have the beauty of England, and one in whom our friend, Sir Harold, feels such an interest, beneath my roof. 'Sir George,' she added, turning to her husband, 'come and be presented to Lady Villiers.'"

The old man advanced, and as he bent over the girl's fair hand with the stateliness of the ancien régime, he said:

"Indeed; I do not marvel that my friend Courtney has lost his heart to Lady Alice, for were I a young man I should do the same."

The younger members of the family were then introduced to the fair guest, and after these ceremonies were over, Harold Courtney proceeded to relate the events which had transpired during that memorable night while her father and the Duke of Ellsmere, who had been invited to spend the hunting season at the house of the Earl of Castleton, were both absent, the terror of the Lady Alice and the servants, the resolve of the marauders to secure her, his own opportune arrival, and their flight. He then declared that he knew she might find a safe asylum with them, and that he had, therefore, brought her thither with all possible despatch.

"There you did not mistake," cried Sir George, drawing his hand across his eyes to dash away the tears which gathered there during the young man's recital. "Here you may find a refuge, for I trust you will be safe in case of an attack by such marauders as besieged your father's hunting-lodge, since our manor-house was quite a formidable stronghold in the perilous times of the Norman conquest. Besides, I have four sturdy sons and a band of brave retainers, who will protect you, and, therefore, you need not fear, Lady Alice."

The girl expressed her gratitude for the welcome she had received, and the cheering assurances of the baronet, and then Courtney said:

"Allow me to beg that you will keep the hiding-place of Lady Alice a secret till the band who made that outrageous onslaught on the Earl of Castleton's hunting-lodge can be apprehended and thrown into prison, or go back to the mountains."

The family circle promised secrecy, and the Lady Melville said, courteously:

"You must both need some refreshment—follow me," and she led the way into a quiet little supper-room, where tall candles shed their light across the dark wainscot, a massive buffet, through whose doors gleamed silver and porcelain, and a table, where a delicious lunch was waiting for some absent member of the family.

To Harold Courtney it seemed like a bright, bewildering dream—such a dream as had floated through his brain in sleeping or waking—to be thus in the society of the beautiful Alice, and as he poured out some wine for her and himself, he murmured, softly:

"Let us drink to the realisation of our fervent hopes, my own Alice!"

The girl blushed and smiled, and when lunch was over, the young man arose, and exclaimed:

"I must now leave you, and ride back to see if I can find any trace of the marauders. I fancy that as soon as they are aware of our flight they will start in mad pursuit."

The young girl's cheek grew pale.

"Heaven protect you!" she faltered.

And as the knight lifted her hand to his lips, he murmured:

"Farewell, dearest!"

And then making his adieus to the family, he strode away, the clang of his spurred heel ringing along corridor and courtyard, while young Maud Melville led Lady Alice to a fine old guest-chamber. When she was alone in the solitude of her room, for hours she sat wakeful, by the glowing embers, thinking over all which had passed during that eventful day, and wondering what her father and her brother Launcelot would think of the attack on the old hunting-lodge, and her flight. She thought, too, of the Duke of Ellsmere's rage and disappointment when he should discover that such an onslaught had been made on her home, and that he was not present to defend his lady-love.

CHAPTER VIII.

Open the temple-gates unto my love,
Open them wide that she may enter in,
And all the poets adorn as doth behave,
And all the pillars deck with garlands trim,
For to receive this maid with honour due.

Spenser.

At the early age of twelve years Richard I. had been affianced to a daughter of Louis, King of France, and the Princess Adeline had been committed to the care of the English monarch till such time as the marriage should be solemnised. But before the death of Henry II., Richard had met the beautiful Berangaria, a princess of Navarre, and now his thoughts often wandered to her, and he resolved to break asunder the bonds which bound him to Adeline and follow the promptings of his own heart.

One day he was pacing restlessly to and fro in the luxurious room to which he had just retired, after a long conference relative to the Crusades, with several persons who stood high in Church and State.

"I must again take the cross, and join the forces who are endeavouring to wrest the holy sepulchre and Palestine from the grasp of the Infidels," he said, aloud; "but, oh, Berangaria, it is the memory of you which bids me to England! I shall never marry Adeline, that is certain, but I wish to win the love of the fair Princess of Navarre ere I take any measures to gain her hand. I have twice sung beneath the palace window at Guilenne, and both times I know she listened intently, and during my last visit she flung a knot of flowers down to the troubadour. Ah, I must see her again!"

At this juncture there was a rap at the door, and the king exclaimed:

"Enter."

As he spoke the door unclosed, and an elderly man, who had faithfully served him for the last ten years, moved towards him, and kneeling before him, said, earnestly:

"Sire, I wish to hold a brief conference with you."

"Go on," said Richard.

And he sank down in a large and elaborately-carved chair, and gazed at the serving-man with his keen, glittering eyes, adding:

"What is it? Some new atrocity against the Jews, or some other case of state?"

"Royal master," replied Hugh Thornton, "I remember your admiration of the beautiful Berangaria, a princess of the royal house of Navarre."

"Oh! yes, yes," cried the king, "my admiration has deepened into love; to you, my faithful old servant, I will confess it, and that I was thinking of her when you knooked for admittance."

"Sire," said Thornton, "a vessel from Navarre has well-nigh foundered in the recent terrible storm, and has been driven far out of its reckoning, and is now beating about in the Thames, two or three miles from London. That tempest-tossed vessel contains the Princess Berangaria!"

"Hugh Thornton," cried the monarch, "I must fly to her rescue. I must seek to win her love first, and then she shall know that her lover is King of England. Make haste—make haste, Hugh, lay aside these robes of state, and bring me the garb I wore, when, as a troubadour, I sang beneath her lattice."

The servant obeyed, and a half-hour later it was proclaimed throughout the palace that the king would transact no more business that day.

Stealing down a staircase he passed unobserved through the hall below, and emerged into the open air. The chill, sleety rain had ceased to fall, but dense clouds still canopied the sky, and the wind howled madly through the streets of the city. Richard stalked across the region in the rear of the palace, and hastened towards the Thames with all possible despatch. When he reached the bank of the river he did not, of course, order any of his state barges to be taken from the boat-houses which sheltered them, but leaped into a wherry, which he hired at a low price of a boatman, and bent his strong arms to the oars. His costume befitting his present purpose, and he wore a skillfully-painted mask, lest his face should be recognised by some of his subjects. The waters of the river surged wildly about him, and boats loosened from their moorings by the violence of the wind were floating to and fro, and occasionally it required all his skill as a boatman to keep from coming in contact with huge timbers drifting about on the turbid river. At length, however, he saw a dimly-lit vessel gleaming out within a stone's throw, her sails torn like the wings of a crippled bird, and the anxious countenances of the master and crew, who were vainly endeavouring to keep the vessel from becoming a perfect wreck.

On, on sped Richard's boat, and then, when within speaking distance, he shouted in stentorian tones:

"Ship ahoy! Ship ahoy! What ship is that?"

"The Ariadne, belonging to Sanche, King of Prussia."

"Aye, aye!" replied the king, "but I have heard that you have on board a royal passenger."

"Yes, stranger, we have the Princess Berangaria, and for her sake we have exerted every effort to keep the craft afloat. She is almost dead with fear."

The next moment the wherry in which the monarch sat was alongside the vessel, and he had a full view of the beautiful Berangaria, though she did not as yet see him. There, kneeling on a hassock, with her white hands clasped, her dark hair sweeping about her, and her brilliant eyes uplifted, she was kneeling in silent prayer. For a moment Richard gazed intently at her, then scaled the side of the vessel, and gained the deck.

"Friend," he said, addressing the master of the craft, "I fancy I can be of great service to you. I will convey the Princess Berangaria, and the ladies of her suite, to a place of safety, and send some of the Thames boatmen to your relief. A carpenter shall also repair the vessel, and make it sea-worthy again; and if there is anything else which you need, it shall be yours."

"I am sincerely grateful for all your kindness," rejoined the master; and then, bounding down the companion-way, Richard once more stood in the presence of the fair enchantress who had won his heart. She was still kneeling, when the monarch murmured softly:

"Beautiful Princess Berangaria!" The royal maiden turned, and fixed her wondering, inquiring gaze upon the tall figure standing before her, and regarding her with admiring eyes.

"Do you recognise the troubadour who has twice sung roundelays beneath your lattice?"

The girl bowed assent, and a warm blush chased the pallor from her cheek.

"Ah! yes; I well remember your songs."

"And the second time," observed the king, "you flung me a knot of spring flowers, which I have kept till this day," and as he spoke he drew forth from the folds of his tunic a faded bouquet.

The eyelids of the young princess drooped, and Richard went on:

"Royal lady, when I heard to-day that a vessel from Navarre, and which was known to have as a passenger the beautiful Princess Berangaria, had been driven out of her reckonings, and was beating about on the Thames, I resolved to row hither and see if I could not have the honour of being of some service to one whom I shall never, never forget, and of whom I was thinking when the tidings of your disaster reached me."

The princess started; a pleasurable thrill swept through her whole frame, and again her face crimsoned.

"Sir minstrel," she replied, "I cannot, cannot tell you what I have suffered during the storm which has been raging, and shall be only too happy to reach a place of safety."

"And your waiting women," observed Richard; "how many have you?"

"Four; and they have been even more terrified than their poor mistress. They are in their own cabin, within call. Hark! do you not hear their sobbing, and prayers, and shrieks? Notwithstanding that the rain has now ceased to fall, the panic still prevails, and they fear our storm-tossed vessel may be the next moment to be a perfect wreck; but I fancy your generous offer will quiet their apprehensions, and fill their hearts with thanksgiving."

The royal lady lifted a bird-call, suspended to a richly chased necklace, and blew a summons, which brought her attendants into the state cabin, with the terror which had settled over them still stamped on every face.

"Ladies," exclaimed the princess, "we have at last found a friend. This gentleman heard of our forlorn condition, and has hastened to our relief, for he will convey us to a place of safety."

"How grateful we are at the prospect of escape!" exclaimed one.

And they hastily gathered about Richard, who stood in their midst, like some good angel, and then, in tremulous tones, the princess continued:

"Oh! sir stranger, your generosity thrills my heart to its profoundest depths."

Richard made some gallant reply, and then said: "Will the Princess Berangaria deign to take the arm of the wandering minstrel?"

The lady blushed and smiled, and gracefully accepted the proffered arm of the stranger, who was unfolding a new and charmed leaf in the book of her destiny, and they were followed by the waiting-women, who carried with them the most valuable articles belonging to the royal passenger and themselves, hurriedly snatched from the heaving vessel. Ere long, the whole party were on deck, the captain and the crew uncovering their heads, as the princess and her ladies advanced, and after renewing his promise to send them speedy aid, the king, with knightly courtesy, assisted the royal lady and her attendants into the boat, with his own hands folded the ermine-

bordered cloak of crimson velvet around the beautiful princess, who felt a novel happiness in all these attentions, and then once more bent to the oars. On, on danced the wherry, impelled by the strong arm of the lion-hearted King of England, and ever and anon some cry broke from the lips of the maids of honour, as danger still seemed to threaten the voyagers; but there, in the prow of the barque, sat the Princess Berangaria, calm and silent, for she felt the fullest confidence in the man who had interposed in her behalf. They had proceeded but a short distance when they met several boats, whose occupants the disguised Richard urged to go to the relief of the distressed vessel yonder, and flinging the payment for their services at their feet, the better to insure their compliance with his request.

"Ha, ha!" laughed one, glancing at the speaker's garments, "you wear the costume of a troubadour," and shouting in a voice which rang high above the tumult of wind and waters, he added: "Methinks I had better take up your calling, since it pays far better than that of a boatman."

Richard smiled, but made no reply. And glancing back occasionally, they could see the boats were fast approaching the Ariadne.

At length the monarch reached London, and landed at a wharf some distance beyond that from which he had set out on his mission.

"Thank heaven you are safe, beautiful princess!" he whispered as he advanced to hand the royal maiden from the barge.

"Oh, sir minstrel!" rejoined Berangaria, "thank heaven for my deliverance; and you—you I can never be sufficiently grateful to for your kindness!"

When the party had landed on the wharf, the seeming minstrel guided the voyagers to an unostentatious mansion in a quiet street. As the troubadour led the royal maiden into the drawing-room, hung with quaint old arras, and furnished with ancient chairs, tables, and cabinets, he said, earnestly:

"This seems scarcely a fitting place to receive the fairest princess in all Christendom, but mayhap King Richard may write you to appear at court, and then you would be provided with more suitable quarters."

"Nay, nay," replied the lady, "do not let the knowledge of my presence here in London be made known to the king, or any of the nobility, I implore you!"

Richard mused a few moments, ere he rejoined:

"Well, be it as you wish. The people in this dwelling will do everything in their power for your comfort, and I will give orders to that effect."

The troubadour left the room, retreating from the presence of the royal lady like a man accustomed to court life, and bowing low, as he glided across the threshold. The tenant of the house to which he had borne the ladies under his protection, was a brother of Hugh Thornton, and joining him, he said: "Your brother has served me long and faithfully, and I believe you are much like him, and that therefore I can trust you with my secret."

"I—I do not understand you," said the man, gazing at his companion in extreme perplexity. "Who, who are you?"

The guest lifted his hands, and removing a mask, painted with such skill that nobody would have detected it from a human face, revealing the countenance of the lion-hearted monarch.

"Ah, sire," exclaimed Thornton, "you are King Richard—pardon my seeming insolence, for I did not dream you could be in this guise," and he dropped on one knee.

"Rise," said the king, "and I will tell you how I came to assume it." And he told the story of his having twice visited the palace of the King of Navarre, and singing beneath the window of the Princess Berangaria as a humble minstrel, the information Hugh had given him that a vessel from Navarre, in which the beautiful young princess was a passenger, had lost her reckoning, and been well-nigh wrecked in the storm, and his resolve to go to her relief, and if possible bring her to a place of safety.

"Nay, more," he added in a low, earnest tone. "I wish to be married for myself, and not for my throne, and for that reason you must guard my secret, till I till I ascertain whether I can win her heart."

Thornton assented to the proposal, and then his wife set about preparing a repast for the storm-tossed mariners, and a servant was employed to remain during the stay of her princess and her ladies.

Time rolled on, and the Ariadne had put into London, where the remainder of her repairs were to be completed, and daily the seeming minstrel met the Princess Berangaria. The second evening when he came to visit her, he had removed his mask after entering the room where she sat turning over the leaves of an illuminated missal, bound in velvet and crusted with gems, which she had brought from Navarre, by the light of a brazen lamp standing by. When she had asked the name of the troubadour in whom she felt such a romantic interest, he had replied:

"How would you like the name of Richard Harris?"

"It is not the name but the character of him who bears it which I value the most, sir minstrel." And now as she heard his step, which she had already learned to distinguish, she looked up, and when he knelt before her she murmured softly: "Assuredly I am bewildered—the form and the hair are all the same but the face is different. You are, and you are not Richard Harris. What is this mystery?"

"Noble lady," rejoined the king, "for certain reasons, which I may one day fully explain, I concealed my own face beneath a mask when I went forth to your rescue. Will you not accord me your pardon?"

"With all my heart; and yet you must, as you have promised, gratify a woman's curiosity by giving me a full explanation."

Richard bowed assent, and then sinking down on a heap of cushions, at the royal lady's command, he struck the strings of the lute he had carried along across his shoulder, and sang the love songs of the times.

The princess in return sang in a sweet voice, which thrilled every nerve of the listening king, and the music was succeeded by a long conversation. Thus night after night passed in a companionship delightful to both, and on the last evening of her stay Richard had despatched a brief note, earnestly begging that he might be permitted to see her alone, when he paid his wonted visit to the princess, and his request was granted. Twilight had deepened into evening when Richard moved into the room where the lady sat in solitude, her rich robe falling in shining masses about her, and the fingers of one hand nervously tapping the lute which leaned against the chair.

"Good evening, sir minstrel," she said, softly; "this is the last night when you will be obliged to come and entertain a forlorn castaway princess."

"Oh, lady, lady," exclaimed her companion, "how deeply I shall miss the society which has cheered so many hours—how often my thoughts will wander to the fair Princess of Navarre!"

As he spoke he sank at her feet, and extending her hand in a graceful gesture, the girl said:

"Rise, rise, I implore you."

"Nay, nay, my place is here, you are the queen of my heart, the queen of my destiny."

He paused an instant, then went on, speaking in a clear and musical tone, which stirred every pulse of the listener.

"Royal lady, beautiful Princess Berangaria, what will you say—you, a king's daughter—if I am mad enough to confess that I have dared love you? I have presumed to bow in homage at your shrine, but oh, few men in the broad universe love with the profound and abiding love which I cherish for you. You haunt my dreams; your lovely face rises before me wherever I go, and your memory will follow me through life, and your name be the last words which my lips will utter in my death-hour."

The maiden did not reply at once, but the crimson surged over her face; her lips quivered, her eyes grew moist with a sudden mist of tears, and her fingers wandered caressingly amid the golden hair of Richard.

"Lady, lady," he exclaimed; "answer me, I conjure you! Speak, speak, and let me know my fate."

"Sir minstrel," replied the royal girl; "love levels all distinctions at this hour. I have forgotten everything save your love and my own."

"Do you indeed return the love I have ventured to breathe into your ear?"

"With all my heart, sir minstrel. Could you not read it in my face ere I acknowledged it in words? My love is as deep and lasting as your own."

"A thousand, thousand blessings on you for that assurance," exclaimed the lover. "There is not a happier man than your Richard in the wide world."

As he spoke, he encircled her tenderly with his arm, and they sat talking long of the past, present, and future.

"And now," said the royal lady, "prithce explain the mystery of your wearing a mask at our first meetings, and when you rescued me from our ill-fated vessel?"

"Not yet, not yet," replied Richard; "but in due time you shall know all my history."

Hours later in the hush of the midnight they parted, and Richard went back to his palace with heart full of fond hopes and dreams.

"She loves me, she loves me," he murmured again and again, as he wended his way homeward beneath the autumn sky; "and for myself alone, not for my crown."

The next morning the seeming minstrel procured palfreys for the Princess Berangaria and the maids of honour, and they took their way to the wharf, Richard walking beside the royal lady who had been thrown upon English soil. In the cabin of the

Ariadne there were tears and sobs on the part of Berangaria, and the monarch's eyes were sorrowful indeed, as he breathed his farewell, folded her to his heart in a parting embrace, and then slowly and reluctantly left the cabin. The scene which Berangaria carried with her, indelibly engraved on memory's tablet, was Richard standing on the wharf, gazing fixedly on the retreating vessel, and waving his hand in adieu.

(To be continued.)

ESSAY ON "NATURE'S WORKS."

If we take a walk in early spring down some rural lane in this favoured isle of ours, we behold the hedges clothed in their garments of bright green, the bud of the May-flower gradually developing, the innocent little birds twittering and carolling on the boughs, the cattle lowing in the meadows, the streamlet gurgling and rippling over its pebbly bed, or winding among the sedges and rushes that grow by its banks, the fishes glinting and darting in the crystal brook, the lambs frolicking in the fields, and later on in the season, when nature is gayest and brightest, when its glories have culminated in summer, we may see the farm-fields covered with their crops of beautiful golden grain, to supply ungrateful man with his "daily bread;" the delicately-formed winged insects buzzing and sporting in the warm and genial rays of the summer sun; the humming bee, after diving deep into the bells and cups of the many coloured and perfumed flowers, returning home laden with honey; the swallows skimming the surface of the lake; "the sun in the heavens and joy on earth."

When the great orb of day makes his welcome presence known above the horizon, the world awakes to life, the mists and dews from the valleys disperse, "the blue mountains glow in the sun's golden light," and as day advances the cattle seek the shade of some pleasant hedgerow, and the hay-makers work among the sweet-scented, new-mown hay; and when the evening has gone, and the glorious sun, now hidden in all his splendour of crimson and gold behind the hills, gives way to night, refreshing sleep overtakes the animal creation, to prepare them for the coming morrow. And these changes, not only those which we experience in one day—of morning, noon, evening and night—but the changes of the seasons—spring, summer, autumn, and winter—have followed each other in proper succession for thousands of years.

First comes spring, when the gardener tills the ground and sows the seed. Now here is food for reflection. Look at seed; what is it? You may break it, or cut it in pieces, and you find nothing of it; but properly plant it, and the mysteries which were hidden within it, acting under an unalterable law of nature, develop it into a plant, which in time and season bears a bloom, and ripens and yields an increased quantity of the same species. Look at the fruit trees, with their splendid blossoms of pink and white. Who but an all-wise and all-powerful Being could change those lovely and fragile flowers into rosy, luscious, juicy fruits?

Again, within that fruit, whatever it may be, we shall discover germs and seeds for reproducing the same kind of fruit another year. It is also astonishing for what a length of time some seeds will retain their germinating power. I remember once reading of some seeds which were found in a vase in a catacomb in Egypt, and which must have been there for at least a thousand years, yet when planted they became in due time transformed into leaves and flowers, as though they were new, fresh seeds.

Not the least noticeable feature in the wondrous works of nature is variety. Our own country shows us this in the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms; but if we take the world at large we find almost innumerable classes of vegetables, animals and minerals.

In tropical climates plants and flowers attain a size and magnificence unknown in Europe; the foliage of the trees is of the most luxuriant description, and varieties are met with there that would not grow here. We find variety in size, colour, form, and perfume, with the floral world, and variety in tastes with fruit and edible vegetables. What wonderful emblems of the power of the Great Supreme are spread before us in the plants, flowers, trees and fruits that spring from the earth!

When summer, with its countless glories has passed, brown autumn comes, the leaves fall from the trees, the flowers droop and die, and nature prepares for winter, with its frost and snow, and bitter cold. But winter has its beauties as well as summer. A fine frosty day, when the crisp grass crackles under our feet, when the boughs and sprays are touched and tufted with snow, when the lakes are frozen over, when the wild fowl congregate and fly in flocks,

when the landscape in its pure and spotless white stretches for miles before the sunlight—all these possess charms and food for meditation. How sweet upon such a day to hear from the tower of some ancient, ivy-clad village church, the Christmas chimes ring out upon the clear frosty air! How the mind must be moved from the scene to the Creator!

So marvellous and diversified are the works of nature, that our thoughts become, as it were, lost in admiration and amazement, and the more we study them the more our admiration increases, and the more ought we to thank and praise the great Author of all these wonders, for permitting us to learn and know so much, and for endowing us with understanding to appreciate them.

We will now take a passing glimpse at the animal world. The same master hand created the ponderous elephant and the minute animalcule. In the animal world we find the same boundless variety as in the vegetable world. First comes man, with his senses of seeing, smelling, hearing, tasting, and feeling; his ambitions, his passions, his skill. He makes, with the talent he has received from the Almighty, the steam-engine to dash over the valleys and through the hills; the ship to plough the ocean and carry the produce of one country to another; the electric telegraph to flash the tidings of good or evil, joy or sorrow through the land. And see the various machines in our factories; the printing press, and all the marvels of art and science which man, by God's help, brings to perfection.

Much might be said, too, of the fidelity and sagacity of the dog, and the noble qualities of the horse. Then, there are all the wild animals, large and small, which infest the forests and the prairies; animals of almost every conceivable form and colour, with different haunts, and living on different kinds of food. These graduate in size from the smallest insect to the largest animal. Myriads of insects of all kinds exist in the grass, in the flowers, in the air, in the water. There are numberless ephemeral insects whose whole life-time is compassed in one day. In this short space of time they flit into existence, arrive at maturity, propagate their species, and die of old age. Yet these minute and short-lived creatures breathe, and possess all the functions of life. If we take up a leaf we find upon it some minute insect; subject that insect to a powerful microscope and innumerable living parasites are discovered on his body, quite invisible to the naked eye, and whose existence we should have been ignorant of but for the blessings conferred upon us by science.

See what myriads of creatures of all forms and shapes dwell in the sea. Then take the birds of the air; here again, we find the same diversity, from the grand and majestic eagle, who soars in freedom up above the lofty mountain crags, down to the poor little robin, who comes to your door to beg a crumb of bread. Some birds are decked by nature in the most gorgeous manner, with their plumage of blue and gold and crimson and white; others are conspicuous, not so much by their appearance, as by the sweet, melodious music which gushes forth from their little throats in strains of praise and thanksgiving to the great Architect of the universe. Notice their little nests, how beautifully they are made! What ingenuity; what patience it must have required to carry all those twigs with which the nest is built.

The wonders that are hidden in the earth, or were hidden until brought to light by geologists, form another branch of study from which a great fund of knowledge may be derived. The metallic ores, minerals, chemicals and fossils found in the earth, many of them proved by scientific men to have been thousands of years in arriving at their present state, show that nature's changes in the formation of the various strata of which the earth is composed, are so slow that the mind of man becomes lost and bewildered in his endeavour to compute the ages through which this earth must have passed.

But of all the great and magnificent works of God with which we are surrounded, perhaps the most grand and sublime is the study of the skies. It is while meditating on this theme that we feel our utter insignificance. It is when looking up at the stars on a clear night, when the thought that these are thousands of worlds, and when the telescope reveals to us thousands more which we should not have seen without its aid, and that there are probably thousands more which even the telescope fail to reveal to us, it is then we stand awe-stricken and spell-bound, and a longing creeps into the soul, and a prayer is tremblingly whispered that hereafter our spirits may be allowed to walk these fields of light, and that we may have a glimpse at the stupendous machinery of the heavens.

Look up at the sky on a summer day; see yon fleecy clouds of white and gold in the distance, passing slowly and majestically along like a gorgeous panorama; listen to the sky-lark revelling in song up, up in the "central blue;" look at the great and

glorious orb of day pouring forth his flood of light on this little world millions of miles away from him, and let us ask ourselves if all these beautiful works of God do not stir up within us our finer feelings, and sometimes make us forget that we are as yet only human.

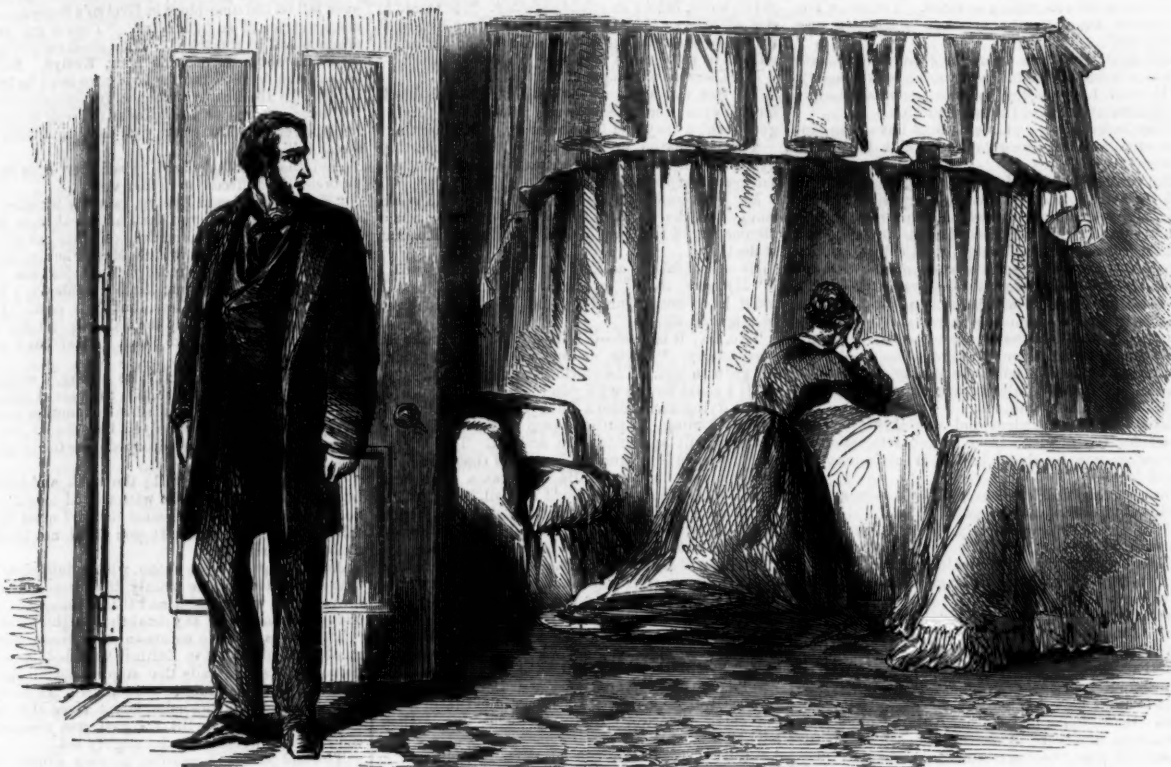
In the fields, in the woods, on the mountains, in the valleys, in the depths of the mighty ocean, in the bowels of the earth, and up in the bright blue sky, do we find mysterious evidences of wonders which have sprung from nothingness at His command. The flight of the comet through the realms of space, travelling at an appalling velocity, and taking centuries to come again within sight of our earth, is as nothing to His omnipotence.

May the light of His love reach our hearts; may the faculties He has in His goodness given us, remain unimpaired while life lasts, so that we may continue to behold and with humility gaze upon the marvels and mysteries of his handiwork, to communicate to our souls that deep feeling of reverence, awe, gratitude, and adoration with which all mankind ought to approach Him; and, finally, when this life is over, may we be found worthy to join the spirits of the blest in the realms of bliss and beatitude.

EXHIBITION AT RHEIMS.—The Society of the Friends of Art, in the famous old city of Rheims, organised its first exhibition of works of art with great success. The place of exhibition was the circus, which the authorities of the city placed at the disposal of the society. The pictures were arranged around the interior of the building, while the drawings and sculpture were placed in an exterior gallery. Here is also a collection of the works of the pupils of the school of design in the district. The society has achieved a great success; the collection of pictures is large, and the list contains the names of a considerable number of the first artists in France, although the exhibition was got up somewhat hurriedly. The works sold amount to 45,000 francs.

DISEASED MEAT IN DUBLIN.—We find from the report of the City Analyst (Dr. Cameron) for the month of August, that no less than 10,000 pounds of meat, besides a large quantity of fish, were, on his evidence, confiscated by the Lord Mayor as being unfit for human food. The total quantity of unsound meat confiscated during the four months ending the 1st September amounted to 41,000 pounds. Only one of the parties implicated in these transactions has been sentenced to imprisonment, and he—a butcher, named Daly, who was convicted by a magistrate and awarded three months' imprisonment—has, through his counsel, stated his intention to appeal to the Court of Queen's Bench. We sincerely hope that the conviction in this case will hold good, as mere fines are shown not to be of the slightest use in putting a stop to this widespread evil.

THE ENGLISH PRISONERS IN PARAGUAY.—Some interesting particulars as to the escape of our countrymen who were so long detained in Paraguay are given in a letter from an officer who assisted at their rescue. Lopez, at the last, seems to have been in sad straits for want of gun-metal. He had melted down all the church bells he could lay hands on, and also the Whitworth shells fired by the Brazilians; but after a time the supply failed, and the manufacture of ordnance was accordingly brought to a standstill. This is suggested as one reason why he let the Europeans go, having no further use for them in his gun factories. There is more reason, however, to suppose that they owed their deliverance to pure accident. Major Parody, an Italian apothecary, whom Lopez had promoted to military honours, and who was left in charge of the captives, waited patiently at Caucupé expecting orders from headquarters, which, however, never came; for the officer charged to convey them got drunk, and the Brazilians were suddenly upon him before he had time to move a step. As to the condition of the liberated captives, the women suffered most, we are told, from the scarcity of food in Lopez's camp. With all his cruelty the President was wise in his generation, and took care that the men employed in the arsenal and other works were well-fed, in order to make the most of their labour. Beef and mutton—a kind of starch obtained from the mandioca root—formed their chief food. Salt was only to be had by the men, and Lopez's own officers. The writer adds—"All the foreigners who have now escaped confirm the worst that has been said as to the frightful atrocities of this merciless tyrant, Lopez, and speak of the terrible state of suspense in which they have lived for months—nay, years past." They speak well of Mr. Gould, late secretary of the British Legation at Buenos Ayres, and are "quite unable to account for the little attention his representations as to the state of the English men, women, and children in Paraguay received from the British Government."



[ONE LAST GLANCE.]

EVELYN'S PLOT.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Love is indestructible,
Its holy flame for ever burneth;
From heaven it came, to heaven returneth,
Too oft on earth a troubled guest,
At times deceived, at times oppressed. *Southey.*
Stronger by weakness, wiser men become
As they draw near to their eternal home,
Leaving the old, both worlds at once they view,
That stand upon the threshold of the new.

Walter.

EVELYN'S blood had rushed back from her face to her heart now. The weight on her chest grew more oppressive, till her breath almost stopped. Fresh woo—fresh distress. Cecil in danger! Oliver threatened with dark and vague sorrow! And she helpless, young, and alone. What could she do to help?

"Speak—tell me!" she gasped.
Edith—for it was of course she—gave a deep sigh, that was, indeed, a fitting answer to the choking sob of which the prayer consisted, rather than actual and intelligible words.

"Compose yourself," she said, sadly. "All must depend on courage and self-control now, when he is in danger. I cannot tell you much. I only know that he has been accused—that he is now arrested on charge of—forgery."

Evelyn did not speak. Her very blood seemed congealed. The web was closing around her. The grief was coming home to her very heart, to her inmost affections.

"Listen," the girl went on. "He is innocent. I know that he is innocent. He told me so. Even if I could have doubted it, his words were sufficient. Only we must have it proved, that is all."

There was a repelling coldness on Evelyn's heart. What had this stranger to do with their very inmost affairs? Why dared she speak of "we" when alluding to Cecil's danger? And how, when he had been so long silent, so long absent from her, did she know all the most inward thoughts and position of her brother?

"Forgive me," she said, with a forced composure, "but I—that is, I think that I should know something of you and your acquaintance with my poor brother, before I fully enter on such terrible details with you. I have not heard from him for so long, and now to have this fresh dreadful news from a stranger, whose name I do not even know—it is so stunning—so terrible."

And she shivered down in the corner of the couch where she sat.

"I told you I had no name," replied the girl, sadly. "It is true. I know neither father nor mother, only a guardian whom I fear and dislike. And for your brother—for Cecil—I am nothing to him, save that he does, or thinks he does, love me. And, if I could do so with honour, I would return that love. I may say so now when he is in disgrace and shame."

"And he has been near you—with you?"
"No, no, do not wrong him. I have never seen him for weeks and months till yesterday; and then, oh, merciful powers, what a meeting!"

Edith covered her face and sobbed aloud. Her composure had fairly broken down at the memory thus conjured up.

"He can be saved, he must," she said, suddenly. "Evelyn Rivers, you will not let your brother perish?"

"Alas, alas! what can I do?" said the girl, groaning. "I am helpless as yourself—powerless."

"But your cousin Mr. Danvers. He can save him; he did it once, when I—yes I bade him watch on that wretched night; and he did, he did it even at my bidding. He will surely do yet more for you."

Poor Evelyn became more and more bewildered.

Who was this mysterious girl thus mixed up with the affairs and the doings of those most dear and near, and yet never alluded to by them? It had been from her, then, that the warning had been given; it was from her prayer that Oliver had acted, when he well nigh lost his life.

Again the cold icy isolation closed over her. All had been wrapped in mystery from her. And Oliver—Cecil had been acting under the advice, and giving their confidence to this stranger.

Edith watched her earnestly.

"You do not—perhaps, you cannot understand," she resumed. "And even now, I cannot tell you all. But a few words may, perhaps, clear the conduct of others from blame. For my vindication I care little; unknown foundling is accountable to no one."

And a bitter look crossed her face.

"I told you," she said, "that your cousin aided your brother at my request. It was under peculiar circumstances. I knew from casual words which I had overheard that Cecil would be in danger on one especial night, that those who were his enemies had laid plans which would then be completed for his utter ruin. And I had no power to save—when by a happy chance your cousin, who had more than once seen your brother with my guardian and myself, was thrown in my way—and I ventured to warn him. I begged him to save his cousin from the danger that threatened him, though I knew not its precise nature. I begged him to watch him and

not lose sight of him till he had won his whole confidence as to his conduct and his danger. Was I wrong, Evelyn Rivers?"

The girl had spoken so proudly, and yet so honestly—her words were so irresistibly just and true—that Evelyn could not but reply:

"No, no—a thousand times, no!"

And yet the remembrance of Oliver's danger, of his suffering, and her own long agony came up before her.

It is galling to know that a stranger has been concerned in such deep and terrible affairs, while all unknown to the nearest and dearest.

Evelyn hated herself for the feeling, yet it was there, crush it as she might.

Edith resumed:

"I know not the result, save that we left London in a few hours, and I guessed that disaster and calamity had happened. And as I told you I never saw Cecil till we met in the steam vessel where his capture was made."

Evelyn was silent for some moments. She looked at the young, fair creature, whose grief was but second to her own. Yes, "second," for Evelyn had lover and brother both in peril; and the girl had but a lover whom she had declared should never win her till he could do it with honour.

Evelyn's heart thawed from the rigid ice that had gathered round it while she had listened. She could but warm to one so young, so lovely, so alike in love and desolation to herself.

One a foundling—the other an orphan; and an orphan with the deepest loneliness in her heart, that of a mother's disgrace and sin. Could there be a greater claim on regard and sympathy?

And both loved, and both were dear to Cecil.

The bitterness that was natural, if not blameless, gradually softened in the young girl's heart. By a sudden impulse she arose and threw her arms around Edith's neck.

"At least," she said, "tell me what to call you. We are sisters in affliction, whatever may be our after fate; we must support each other and be brave for the sake of those we love."

But even as she spoke the tears that rained down her face belied her words; she leaned her head on Edith's shoulder, and wept unrestrainedly.

"I am called Edith," said the girl, caressing the weeping girl, her own eyes drying in the moisture that bedewed them—the burning tears that glittered through the damp eyelashes. "I cannot weep, Evelyn, I am too hopeless, too wretched."

"Not so wretched as I am," murmured the poor girl,

sadly; "not so wretched. You have only one to grieve for; I have all, everything at stake. You know not, you cannot know, the misery that is hanging over us and all."

And again the tears came in strong, convulsive sobs that betrayed the full force of the heart's agony. "Heaven have mercy on this doomed house!" sounded on the ears of the startled girls.

They looked up; a painter would have been, indeed, struck by the living tableaux which that room contained.

The two fair girls, so different and yet so beautiful, with the same look of startled, sad suffering in their faces, and yet betrayed in such different ways. Edith, with her proud, glittering, half defiant blue eyes, and flushed, fevered cheek; Evelyn, pale, colourless, her large grey eyes full of such a world of sadness and womanly devotion; while in the doorway, still holding in her hand the handle which she had just turned so noiselessly as to escape the notice of the two pre-engrossed girls, stood the strange spectrelike figure of the nurse. A spirit from the grave could not have been more utterly bloodless than her face at the moment, more completely fixed and motionless in the attitude she had assumed.

Even the grief-stricken and woeful girls were roused for the moment from the contemplation of their own sorrow by the sight of that fearful expression of face.

Her eyes lingered longest on Edith's face as she stood there in her statue-like grief.

"Who are you?" came slowly and, as it were, unconsciously from her lips.

Edith did not reply. Evelyn interposed.

"A friend of mine, Mrs. Fleming," she said, briefly.

"What is it you want with me?"

Perhaps she spoke rather coldly, for the intrusion appeared to her so ill-timed, and, truth to tell, impertinent. Mrs. Fleming bowed her head in the silent, half-proud, half-submissive patience that was her usual manner.

"It is not I that want you," she said, "but your uncle. He is worse in body but better in mind than I have seen him yet. And—and he has asked for you and his son; the son is absent. Come, or it may be too late."

Evelyn shivered violently as she arose.

"More woe, more woe! Oh, heaven have mercy on us!" she said. "Have you sent—"

"I have sent for no one," replied the woman. "Why torture the dying? The last hour is come, and it is vain to bring strangers to witness it."

Again her eyes rested on the fair face of the girl Edith, with a lingering inquiry in their gaze.

"Do you come," she said; "you look as if you could suffer, and comfort those that suffer. Support that poor, trembling child in this new trial."

Edith placed herself silently at Evelyn's side, and drawing her arms in hers prepared to follow the nurse.

"Do you go on the other side; she is faint, trembling," she exclaimed, as she felt Evelyn's step falter. But Mrs. Fleming shook her head.

"I cannot; I dare not!" she murmured. "Stay but a moment."

And passing rapidly down the stairs, she returned in a brief, almost incredible space of time, with a glass of wine.

"Drink this," she said, peremptorily; "drink it, and collect yourself for the sake of the dying and the living."

There was a touch of sternness in the tone, but the next instant it had passed away. And as she again prepared to lead the way to the invalid's apartment, Edith heard her murmur:

"Poor child, poor child! Why must the sins be visited on her?"

The stimulant had somewhat revived Evelyn's failing strength. She stood for one brief moment, as if to master the emotion that shook her every muscle, and then, with a firmer step and calmer mien she passed her hand through Edith's arm and followed Mrs. Fleming.

It was an extraordinary anomaly, had there been calmness and leisure to consider it that a mere stranger one whose very name was a secret, and whose existence had been unknown to Evelyn but an hour before, should be admitted to a death chamber; but sorrow and love levels all such distinctions and etiquettes. And there was an irresistible influence in the commanding air which the nurse could at times assume.

Evelyn clung to one so near her own age, so identical in position and in sorrow with herself, and felt as if the lonely desolation of her position was in some degree softened by her presence.

They entered the dark and silent chamber. Mrs. Fleming quietly stood by the bed-side of the dying man, her eyes fixed on him with a look that Evelyn had never seen in them before; a look of deep sadness, of affection, of half timid, half resigned terror

such as might have been seen in a penitent and forgiven child, before an offended father. It occurred to her all afterwards, at the time each image appeared rather to impress itself unconsciously on her mind, only to be reproduced in memory's seat hereafter.

Mr. Danvers was supported by pillows.

His face was white as the linen beneath his head, but his eyes wore a look of recognition and intelligence which they had lost for many a long month.

The gray hue on the features, the peculiar unearthly expression in the whole face, spoke of death, even to the most inexperienced.

Mr. Danvers had long been as it were dead to his family and the world, but in that hour there was a glimmering of the lamp of life, even in the moment of death.

He smiled faintly as Evelyn approached the bed.

"My poor child," he murmured, "would that I could have been spared—would that I could have been spared till—"

"No, no; it is best—it is best," the girl broke in, passionately. "Uncle, dearest uncle, oh, if I could but go with you. The world is so dark and dreary, oh, if I could but go with you!"

The dying man smiled a faint yet reassuring smile.

"My darling, be patient, keep brave and hopeful and God will appear for you and all. Tell Oliver that I blessed him from my heart and that I feel the blessing will be heard. He has been a noble and true son, and the promise shall not fail."

Evelyn shuddered. How little did the happy dying man guess of the misery that awaited the son for whom he thus calmly anticipated blessing and joy.

"Why will he not come," the father murmured, as the brief gleam of strength and consciousness began to fade. "Why will he not come. My son, my first-born; he ought to close my eyes!"

"He will not be long, he will soon return," moaned Evelyn, sadly. "He was forced to leave this morning, and he did not know—"

"That I was dying," said Mr. Danvers feebly. "Poor Oliver! poor—poor Oliver; ah, the notes—the notes, why were they kept—why were they kept?"

"What notes?" exclaimed Evelyn, eagerly.

Mr. Danvers' mind was beginning to wander again. "The notes, you know, thousands of pounds, I thought should not be destroyed. Yet I was rich, rich, till—till he—"

His eyes were wondering around, as if searching for some object, perhaps by the longed-for form of his son.

They rested at last on Edith's face, as she stood some little distance from the bed, in silent contemplation of the sorrowful scene.

"Who is that—who is that?" he exclaimed, with sudden energy. "Is it Julia, my poor Julia, come to fetch me. But no, no; she was old—old to that young face. It is not her. No—no."

"Come near, let him see you," whispered Mrs. Fleming, drawing the girl forward.

Mr. Danvers gazed earnestly with his rapidly dimming eyes.

"No, no," he said, "it is not; but so like, so very like. Let me touch your hand. You are so like her when we were both young and happy."

Edith placed her small soft fingers in his, and bent over him.

He looked at her with a passing tenderness.

"Thanks, thanks," he said, "perhaps you are her spirit as I thought. She would look young and beautiful in heaven, you know. But I feel your hand now, and I know it is not my Julia's. Bless you, bless you for bringing her face back to me just as she was then."

And he pressed her hand feebly in his cold, nerveless fingers.

"Evelyn, Oliver, where are you?" he exclaimed suddenly, a kind of spasm appearing to rouse him from the apathy in which he was sinking. "Tell him to bring them all, all," he murmured. "They are not safe—not safe. I—I distrust, I fear him. And—and—"

The voice died away.

There was deep silence for a minute or two in that death chamber.

Then he suddenly opened his eyes once more, fixed them on Edith, and murmured with a calm, placid smile:

"Julia, Julia, I come! Heaven have mercy on me!"

He drew one long breath, his eyes quivered like a sobbing child—then all was still.

Mrs. Fleming laid her hand on the wrist. It had ceased to beat.

"Heaven has taken him from the evil to come," she said, solemnly. "Heaven help the living; let none mourn for the dead."

And she pressed down the lids over the eyes, while Edith gently drew the weeping Evelyn from the room, her own tears mingling with Evelyn's.

"I must leave you now," she said hurriedly, as her eyes fell on the time-piece in Evelyn's dressing-room, some quarter of an hour after. "I must go, or my absence will be remarked. But I shall see you again. Trust me not to forget this hour, Evelyn. For the sake of the dead and of the living we shall be friends for life. In absence or presence, in joy and sorrow, I will ever hold my own happiness, my own wishes and hopes, ever as nothing for your sake and Cecil's. I swear it!"

And the impetuous girl raised her eyes to the heavens in confirmation of her vow.

"Hush, hush," said Evelyn, in a low whisper. "It must not, cannot be; you shall not speak thus, Edith. It is not for another to be dragged into our misery; the doomed house of which Mrs. Fleming speaks need not bring yet one more victim in its ruin. May heaven bless you for your kindness this day; it has been my hour of weakness, but it is past. I can thank heaven, Edith, that the helpless and the weak are taken from the evil to come. I feel that I can be brave now, and I will."

"For his sake, for Cecil's, be strong," whispered Edith, as she bent down to kiss the pale cheeks.

Perhaps the words sounded in yet another sense to Evelyn, for a faint blush dyed her cheeks, and the long, sweeping eyelashes drooped over the large eyes as she replied, firmly.

"By heaven's help I will; the weak and troubled hour is over. I can but die with those I love if I cannot die for them. But I must think, I must think! Edith, my sister, farewell; you shall not blush for me, whatever betide."

And the gray eyes shone with a full, clear light that spoke even more plainly than words, that the brave spirit was roused, and that nothing but death should conquer it in any trial that might await her.

There was a noble nature in both those fair and much tried girls, but in Edith it sparkled like an impetuous silvery cascade that stopped not till each obstacle within reach might be removed. In Evelyn it wore the aspect of the calm, silent river that might pause but never stop till the goal was reached and the course mingled with the mighty sea.

The end proposed and the bravery shown might be the same, but the means used were diverse as the poles.

CHAPTER XXIX

I see, I see thee near,
I know thy hurried step, thy haggard eye;
Like thee I start, like thee disordered fly,
For lo, what horrors in thy train appear—
Danger, whose limbs of grief mould,
What mortal eye can fix'd behold? Collins.

THE day had passed as such days ever do. The closed shutters, the noiseless, stealthy steps, the hushed voices, all spoke of the presence of death.

Still Oliver came not. The hours passed slowly on. But Evelyn listened and watched in vain. Her tears flowed in silence. Then they were hushed and dried in terror. The dead was at rest. But where was the living? Where was the absent Oliver? As the darkness drew on, the suspense and agony became almost insupportable.

She knew not where to send—where to go in search of the absent one. He had bade her farewell in the morning, with a brief, grave tenderness, that had even at the time struck her with apprehension. Still he had spoken of his return ere the dinner hour, and begged her to keep herself calm, and prepared for whatever tidings he might bring.

"I do not disguise from you that much may hang on this day's events, Evelyn. But not all—not all. Only time and heaven's blessing can avert the chief danger that hangs over my head."

"And you will not trust—you will not confide in me, Oliver?" she had said, reproachfully.

"If I alone were concerned, you should know all," he had replied, firmly. "But there are others involved, whom I have no right nor even power to expose in the revelation. Heaven grant that I may one day have no secrets from you, nor anyone. It is an odious weight, Evelyn—a terrible weight!"

Such had been the farewell in the morning when the son departed, little imagining that he should never again return to his father's house—that ere he re-entered its gates that father would have gone for ever from the earth and earthly habitations.

And as the shock of that sudden departure had passed away, and Evelyn's composure returned, she had dwelt yet more on the half-forgotten words, and weighed each expression again and again in the anxious moments that intervened.

At last the darkness had closed in. Eight o'clock struck. It was the hour of dinner. What a mockery in that house of mourning!

Lizzie brought some refreshments to her young lady's room in the faint hope that she might persuade her to taste them. In vain.

Evelyn swallowed a few mouthfuls of bread and a glass of wine, and then sent away the tempting tray

that had been so carefully arranged by the affectionate girl; it choked her to eat.

That quarter-deck walk, the resource of the anxious and the troubled in their suspense, was renewed.

Yet another half-hour passed. Then, oh, glad sound, the door-bell rang with a somewhat vehement pull. It sounded so strange. Like life in the midst of death. When the silence and the shadow of the grave are on the household, then the slightest occurrence that recalls the actual world is alike thrilling and animating.

But in the present case it was like the sound of joy bells in poor Evelyn's ears. She sprang from the sofa on which she had just sunk in the sickness of hope deferred, and rushed to the door of her room.

It was Oliver's voice that sounded in the stillness, Oliver's step that hastened up the stairs, after a brief parley with the domestic. And in another moment she was in Oliver's arms. There was no reserve now, no coldness, nor even maidenly shyness. He had returned—he was safe! And, for the moment, even the sad tidings he had come to hear were forgotten.

"Oh, Oliver, I have so longed for you. I thought you would never come," she said, sobbing half hysterically as she rested in his arms, scarcely perceiving the deep sadness of his look as he bent over her.

"My poor Evelyn, you must, indeed, have suffered. The change was so awfully sudden. And yet, Evelyn, I thank heaven that he is taken from the evil to come."

Again those words. Evelyn shuddered involuntarily.

"Oliver, what has happened? I implore you to tell me," she said, gaspingly. "I will be brave, only tell me the truth."

"Evelyn, it is soon told," he said. "At least, all that can be told, all that is real and tangible in the troubles which are thickening about us. We—that is, I—am ruined, unless some extraordinary help comes. There is scarcely a shadow of hope left."

She looked up with a calm, sweet smile.

"Is that all, Oliver?"

"All, Evelyn. Alas, alas, you cannot realise it—you, brought up in luxury and wealth. And your small fortune is involved also, my poor darling. Do not hate me, Evelyn. It was not in my power to avert the calamity. Heaven grant that I may yet repair the injury that has been done you."

"Heaven grant it, too, Oliver, for then all—"

She could not finish the sentence. Cecil's danger recurred to her. Edith's warning and prayers. How could she bear to add to Oliver's grief by the wretched tidings? And yet it was mockery to speak words of hope or comfort, with that terrible fear in his heart. She was gazing sadly on the ground, his anxious eyes fixed on her pale, changing face, with a sort of unutterable affection and sadness, when again a sharp clang of the door bell startled them both from their sad and silent sorrow.

Oliver involuntarily clasped Evelyn closer to his heart, either to guard her from any danger that could threaten, or to secure one last fond embrace ere parted by any earthly power that even such love could not resist.

The sound of footsteps rapidly approaching was heard. Oliver pressed a kiss on the cold lips, and placing her on the couch, hastened to the door ere it could be opened. A few muttered words, inaudible to Evelyn, were heard. Then he hastily returned.

"Evelyn, I am wanted. I will return to you in a few minutes."

She clung to him.

"You will not go; you will not leave me, Oliver?"

"My darling, I must see the persons waiting for me," he said; "you will not make my duty more difficult for me. You will be brave, will you not, for my sake?"

She gazed up in his face.

"I understand you," she said, with strange calmness. "I will try, Oliver; I will not add to your suffering; only do not deceive me in anything. I can bear all but that."

He clasped her convulsively to his heart for a moment, murmured a blessing on her, and then left the room. He hastened rapidly down stairs to the hall. Two men of very gentlemanly bearing and appearance were waiting for him. The eldest of the two stepped forward with a bow that might have graced a saloon.

"Mr. Oliver Danvers I believe?"

"The same."

"Can we have a word in private with you, sir?" glancing round at the servants hanging about in uneasy wonder.

"Certainly," he replied, with a calm dignity that would have repressed insolence had the intruders been inclined to display it. "Will you follow me into the dining-room?"

The men pressed, perhaps, rather closer on his steps than was consistent with good breeding, or the

usual courtesies from inferiors. And, as the door closed behind them, one of them handed to him a folded paper, without a word.

Oliver read it with a rapid, firm look.

"I am to understand from this that I am your prisoner?" he said, calmly.

"Certainly, sir."

"On a criminal charge?"

The man bowed.

"I see you are not taken by surprise, sir," observed the younger and sharper looking of the men.

"I have gone through too much during the last few months to be unprepared for anything," he replied, quietly. "But this is not the place for discussing such matters. Am I to go with you at once; I presume you are aware that there is death in this house. My father's corpse is lying within a few yards of me, and I have not yet looked upon it."

The men exchanged glances.

It was plain that sympathy and suspicion were struggling within them.

"Well, sir, I am sure we have no wish to be harsh with any gentleman, nor to doubt his word; I don't say that it is absolutely necessary that you should go with me at once, sir, if you have any arrangements to make. But you see we cannot lose sight of you, for we are answerable for your appearance, and a young gent did slip through our fingers at this very house not many months since. But still, if you don't object to our keeping you in sight, and have any arrangements to make, I am not the man to refuse a gentleman any little indulgence under such circumstances."

Oliver thought silently for a few minutes.

"Perhaps," he said, at last, "perhaps it is only adding to and prolonging the torture. I will only detain you while I perform two necessary duties; one to pay a brief visit to my father's chamber, and the other to pen a few lines to a relative; then I will go with you."

The man was evidently struck with the calm, gentle, manly bearing of their prisoner.

"Don't hurry, sir. As I said, we can wait, so long as we have sight of you. I'm free to say that it is a sad business, as I ever knew."

Oliver did not trust himself to speak. He was galled in spite of himself by the man's manner, and yet he knew well that he was only doing his duty.

He took a lamp from the sideboard, and, passing through an inner door, went up to his father's room, followed by his strange and unwelcome companions. He opened the door softly. Only one tenant of the room was there besides the dead.

It was Mrs. Fleming, looking even more spirit-like and ghostly than usual.

"You have been long in coming," she said, in a low, suppressed tone, as she drew back the sheet from the calm face of the dead. "Is there more grief for this wretched household?"

He bowed his head.

"I know not who you are," he said, after a brief reverent gaze at the happy dead. "I know not who you are, but, at least, I am certain that you are no ordinary woman. And in this crisis of sorrow and alarm which has fallen on us, I commit my cousin to your care—your tenderness. Tell her—"

The woman shivered suddenly, and dropped the sheet that she held over the features of the dead.

"No, no," she said; "I cannot. Do not ask it. It is useless—impossible."

He looked wonderingly on the agitated woman.

"I cannot understand you," he said. "You showed rare kindness to me—a stranger; you have devoted yourself to my poor father; and would have gone on to do so had his life been spared. And yet you refuse to show some maternal sympathy to that poor girl in her solitude and agony. You cannot mean to refuse such a request, such claims upon your consideration and kindness!"

"What right have you to question my actions? I am free to decide and to act for myself, I may claim that privilege. I am going to leave your house. In less than an hour I shall be far away. I must go. You cannot detain me!"

Her manner was so hurried and agitated, that Oliver could but suppose her nerves had been in some degree shaken by the sudden shock of the past day. And yet, was it not her vocation to tend the sick and the dying?

He could not comprehend the mystery that hung over her. But it was no time to puzzle on such matters, or even dwell upon them.

"I have no power to detain you," he said, calmly. "If womanly tenderness and regard for that young and lovely girl has no influence on your actions, it were vain for me to keep you, if I had. Tell me; did he leave no message, no blessing for his son?"

"His blessing! yes," she replied, "and a few broken words, that sounded rather like delirious ravings than a message. He spoke of—"

But a warning glance from Oliver stopped her,

though not before the men had caught both the unfinished sentence and the look which had stopped it.

A meaning nod passed between them. Oliver's face flushed. It was the beginning of the degradation that lay before him. He moved hastily from the bed, and glided to the door, beckoning Mrs. Fleming to follow him within hearing of the men.

"I have but one word more to say," he continued.

"The salary due to you will be paid by the housekeeper, but my obligations to you are not to be so soon cancelled. If I ever have the power to serve you in any way, then you shall find I am not ungrateful. But, at present, I am helpless, and worse than helpless. Farewell. We may, perhaps, even yet, meet in happier times."

"No, no, no," she said. "Never for me, never for me. There is no relief in this world for such as I am. And I dare not even think of the next. But for your goodness to the lonely and the desolate one, may heaven bless you, Oliver Danvers, and deliver you from your present danger."

He extended his hand to her. She clasped it in her own for a brief instant. Then she dropped it, as if some pang had suddenly pierced her, and returned to the bed where the corpse lay.

As Oliver left the room, and gave one last lingering glance at his father's senseless remains, he saw that she had sunk on her knees by the couch, and buried her face in the clothes. Even his own deep sorrow and danger could not so wholly engross his mind as to ignore that unhappy woman's strange despair, and her singular refusal to remain, even under such circumstances, in the house.

It could be no real necessity that impelled her to leave Evelyn alone in her grief, for had Mr. Danvers lived she must have retained her post. And that it was no imaginary or selfish cause that actuated her apparent unfeeling conduct, he felt equally convinced. Yet the mystery only deepened his confidence in her truth.

And Oliver's thoughts were for the moment diverted somewhat from his own woes by speculations as to the mysterious and interesting unknown. But then his mind quickly reverted to Evelyn. He dared not see her. He could not meet her tears, her questions; he could not bear to look on her sweet, pale face in its desolate agony.

He hastily snatched pen and ink as they returned to the library, and penned a few rapid lines.

"MY OWN EVELYN,—I am obliged to leave you, even in this hour of sorrow. But do not despair, dearest. For my sake try to keep up under this heavy trial. Trust still that there is light behind the darkness. If you are brave, I promise not to disgrace you. I can be a man, dearest, unless anxiety for you shall weaken me too much. All depends on your courage—your fortitude, my cousin. I know that you will not fail in the trial. I will explain all, by letter or by message in a very short time. Till you hear, remain quiet and do nothing, see no one, unless they come from me."

"Your devoted Oliver."

He closed the note, sealed it, and then ringing the bell, he desired Miss River's maid should be sent to him.

Lizzie quickly appeared, pale and scared, but still inquisitive enough as to the unusual occurrence of being sent for by Mr. Oliver, to be quite capable of receiving and comprehending his directions.

"Take that to your mistress in about a quarter of an hour, Lizzie, and while I am away from home, I expect you to watch over her, to the very utmost of your ability. And take care to let no one see her, on any pretext, without her special orders. You understand me, Lizzie? It shall not be unrewarded if you will prove yourself prudent as well as affectionate in this emergency."

Lizzie burst into tears.

"Oh, Mr. Oliver, it was not my fault!" she said. "The young lady would see Miss Evelyn, and I only took in the message, as I was bound to do."

"What young lady?" asked the young man, eagerly.

"She didn't give her name, sir; but she was very fair and very young, sir—younger almost than Miss Evelyn."

"And with very golden hair?" asked the young man.

"Yes, sir, and she seemed in great trouble, sir, though she looked more flurried and feverish than sad and pale, as poor Miss Evelyn does."

Oliver asked no more, but he voluntarily breathed the same prayer that had come from Mrs. Fleming's lips.

"Heaven have mercy on this doomed house!"

There was but little more to do. He wrote a few brief directions for his father's funeral, which he desired should be delivered to the housekeeper. And then, turning to his captors, he simply remarked:

"I am ready."

"Better take some clothes with you, sir," remarked the man. "You'll not be prevented wearing them till afterwards, you know."

And he gave a meaning nod, that brought a flush to Oliver's cheek.

"I can send for what I want," he said, hastily. "I can send for what I want; only let me go at once."

"Hem! it's not often gentlemen are in a hurry to go where I'm going to take you," said the elder of the men, half scornfully; "though they may be precious glad to get away again. But I am willing, if you are. Suppose you will like a cab, sir; always better where it can be paid for."

And the man nodded significantly. Oliver hastily put a sovereign in his hand, and after one brief glance around, he prepared to leave the familiar scene, perhaps never to return. He followed the man into the hall.

"Go and call a cab, Jim," said the elder of the men; "unless this young man will do the job," glancing at a porter who stood gaping in the hall.

"There's one at the door," he said, "one at the door for—"

"Never mind who it's for—your master must have it," said the man, peremptorily. "Now, sir, if you please."

But Oliver stopped for a moment.

"Is it for Mrs. Fleming?" he asked.

"Yes, sir," was the reply, "she ordered it a few minutes since."

Oliver made no farther remarks or delay. He entered the cab, one of the men followed him, the other jumped on the box, and the vehicle drove off.

"Heaven have mercy on us," exclaimed the young man, as he stood gazing after them. "Why, they're officers, that's certain, and it's my belief they're taking Mr. Oliver to prison. Well, it's a queer house, that's certain. Mr. Oliver gone to prison, the old gentleman dead, and the nurse off before he's well cold. The sooner I'm out of it the better, and I'll give warning before another hour's over my head. And if I'm not mistaken there's others will do the same."

And the porter resumed his usual seat in the hall, with a remarkably disgusted expression of countenance that promised a full performance of his words.

Mrs. Fleming had been certainly rapid in her arrangements for her departure from Belgrave Square. In less than half an hour after Oliver's cab had driven off, she had prepared all for leaving the house of death.

She had kept her preparations, however, so profoundly secret, that no one but one or two of the inferior servants was aware of her intentions. She lingered yet a few minutes in the death-chamber, as if some strange fascination still existed in its gloom.

She knelt beside the bed, and her whole frame shivered under the influence of some deep and strong emotion—an emotion that could scarcely be accounted for by the death of a patient whom she had only known in imbecility, and in hopelessness.

"Oh, if I could but stay," she murmured, "if I could but stay. If he had been spared, then I should not have been guilty in yielding to this yearning desire. But now—but now, I dare not, I must not sin yet more deeply. No, no!—at least, let me not increase my guilt."

She thought deeply for a few minutes.

"Can it be," she murmured; "can it be? No, no, it is impossible! Crime was never in that honest heart, that noble brow. It is for others he is suffering. And if my life—and more than life—could avert it, I would cheerfully lay it down for him and her. Poor child, poor child! To drink the cup of sorrow thus early, and to such bitter draughts. Heaven help her—I dare not."

She took the cover once more from the face of the dead, and gazed earnestly.

"Happy, happy dead; who dares mourn for thee?" she said, solemnly. "Heaven have pity on thee in this dark hour."

Then replacing it once more on the cold, calm features that had now regained much of their original strength and manliness in death, she walked steadily from the room.

Some minutes afterwards she had left the house as suddenly and as mysteriously as she had entered it.

(To be continued.)

BIG BEN'S INSCRIPTION.—A writer in *Notes and Queries* points out an objection to the inscription under the face of the great clock of the Houses of Parliament. It is as follows:—"Domine salvam fac reginam nostram Victorianam primam." He says the glaring absurdity of *primam* will perhaps more clearly appear when I tell you that a near relation of my own was once acute enough to discover (as a solicitor) that a deed had been forged by its beginning, "This indenture made the — day of — in

the — year of our sovereign lord King Charles the First," &c. Until there has been a second Queen Victoria why need we speak of the first? This is not the first time that the error of calling her Majesty Victoria the First has been pointed out. Who knows but that she may be Victoria the last, or the only Victoria of her class?

GRAND COURT.

BY THE

Author of "*Sometimes Sapphire, Sometimes Pale*," &c.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

I have supped full of horrors;
Direness, familiar to my slaughterous thoughts,
Cannot once start me. *Macbeth.*

"Nay," said Rokewood; "you began by stating that you wished to speak plainly, and I wish to know what you do insinuate? what you do suspect?"

"I do not, I dare not suspect," responded the rector, solemnly; "I only say that it behoves you above all men to make a strict search after these miscreants, to leave no stone unturned that may conceal evidence which might help to bring them to justice; offer large rewards. You, sir, you can afford it out of the immense fortune of the two sisters. Offer, I repeat, large rewards of a thousand pounds for their apprehension."

"You are very kind; parsons are usually very kind in offering advice gratis where it is not desired," responded Rokewood, with his bitter, sneering smile; "but I have Lady Monkhouse to consult, she it is who profits by the deaths of these young ladies."

"Murder, murder, murder!" muttered the squire; "murder done in my house, and I sitting in my room listening, knowing they were coming."

"How mad with drink he is," said Rokewood.

"I do not agree with you," responded the rector. "Well," said Rokewood, "we will agree to differ; but I am hungry; I ate no breakfast this morning and now I want something to drink, and a bit of cheese and a biscuit, anything. Hallo! squire; shall we order in cold brandy and a mutton chop, or some devilled kidneys?"

The squire made a gesture of disgust.

"Keep him from me and brandy," he said to the rector. "I can't pray while he is by."

Rokewood strode out of the room with a laugh. He seemed to know his way about, and after taking a few turns in winding passages, found himself at the entrance of a great kitchen, where several servants, several policemen, and several villagers from Yauworth were sitting about a blazing fire, drinking ale, eating bread and cheese, and talking in whispers. It was a sort of lunch before tea, in which the squire's servants were indulging. When they saw the gloomy master of Cumberton, with his sneering smile and grizzled moustache a sort of hush fell over them.

"Well, my friends," said he, "this is a sad, sad event, a very sad event; it is awkward for your poor master, awkward for you, because it will be thought so unlikely, I am afraid, that burglars could have entered without your hearing them. We must not lose courage, however; we must search for these demons of iniquity."

"I don't expect we shall have to search far," said one policeman, pulling off his cap in respect to Rokewood. "We know of two men having been seen at seven o'clock this morning, near to a farm called Glean Royde; two fellows whose clothes were respectable, but who seemed to be skulking about, notwithstanding in a manner which excited suspicion, and it was found afterwards they had lighted a fire on the hill side beyond the piece of enclosed land where the farmer turns out the geese in summer time, and there is a peculiar smell about the charcoal they have left, and some remains of rags, which the doctor has now in his possession, and he says no doubt they changed their clothes and burnt those which were stained."

"And who, pray, saw these men at seven o'clock on a January morning, when it is dark as night?" asked Rokewood, with a scoffing laugh.

"The herd boy," responded the policeman, in a tone of surprise at the gentleman's petulance.

"Oh, the herd boy!" echoed the secretary, still laughing. "When you police fellows get once upon a scent you follow it out, no matter whether it be right or wrong, to the end, and then you allow the real culprit to escape."

The old butler had entered the wide kitchen through another door, unperceived by Rokewood, and now he came suddenly to the front of the fire, took off his cap, and the red reflected glow of the sun sinking early to rest came through the window, and lighted his fine old face and falling white hairs with a halo. He looked upwards and clasped his hands. Tears glittered in his honest blue eyes.

"Whoever and whatever these murderers may be," cried he, "may heaven, to whom vengeance belongs,

bring them to justice before three weeks are over!"

He spoke in a deep reverent tone. It was a supplication—it was the cry of a good man to the Father of all mercies, to the God of all righteousness. A loud, deep response, a fervent amen burst from the lips simultaneously of all those present, saving Rokewood.

He turned more livid, his eyes blazed like live coals, he bit the ends of his grizzled moustache; he tried to smile, he tried to speak. The chief of the police, marking him, taking note of his bushy dark brows, his sinister lip, his pallor, his silence, made his own reflections on this singular man, and resolved henceforth to watch him.

"Well, my friends," said Rokewood, "I hope you will not allow this tragical event to weigh upon your spirits, or to interfere with your appreciation of the generous fare which Squire Macray's larders and cellars supply."

And with that he smiled sourly, bowed slightly, and walked away. He returned to the hall, forgetting in his deep perturbation and nervous annoyances that he had not asked for the refreshment and food, which he now began seriously to crave. He went back again, then, towards the large, hospitable kitchen. He heard his own name and that of the countess as he approached the door. Do what he would, his guilty, cruel heart stood, as it were, still with fear. He leant against a wall to listen. The red glow of the fire flashed out of the open doorway, but he stood in the shadow, for twilight was fast gathering over the old house. He listened.

"A guilt-stricken face, if ever there was one," said the voice of the cook. "I watched him all the while he stood under the doorway, and I am as sure as that I am sitting here he knows a lot more about last night's work than he likes to tell. Why, do not thousands, and thousands, and thousands go to that pretty young creature's stepmother? And is not the stepmother his niece? It was the landlady down at the 'Crown Inn' at Yauworth, that told me all that," pursued the cook, "and I'm sure, ever since the sweet young creature was shut up in those rooms, pretty lamb, just as if she had committed robbery or bigamy, only because she chose to get married, I always said it was a sin and a shame. That red-haired nurse was cruel to her, I'll be bound, and the master let it all go on, just because this villain Rokewood paid him money. I knew it was a sin and a cruelty. I always meant to protest against it some day, and me and the butler have talked over helping her to escape before now; but who—who was to think that the red-handed ruffians would drop down upon us in our sleep and murder the poor dove and the others, just for a pretence like, and as for the poor missus's pink topaz and amethyst sets being taken, and the gold chains and rings and silver cups, that's only part of the scheme. Harkened to the squire when he raves. It's not of the loss. Bless your life, he is right well paid for that, over and over again. It's all about murder and guilt. The squire is a changed man."

"I say, missus," broke forth the policeman, "you must not give your tongue such licence. It may be all as you say, and I admit it's like enough, but it's actionable to talk so; and if it's true, depend upon it the facts will come out, as right and pat as you please, and we shall find the men who did the deed, and have master secretary in prison before a month is passed."

Rokewood shivered; his head swam. He clutched at the empty air for support—he reeled, staggered, but mastering this weakness by a mighty effort, he walked into the kitchen, holding his head aloft, and smiling the while.

"I am very hungry, my good friends," he said. "I was so agitated this morning that I could eat nothing. Your master has the whim of keeping early hours, and dining at two. Dinner is over, but I must beg the kind housekeeper to extend her charity towards me, and send into the dining-room a chop, or a cold game pie, or a cold round of beef. Something I must have, and some of your Christmas ale, please. I am cold and starved."

"Certainly, sir," broke from the servants in a chorus.

He had spoken to them in his calm, self-possessed way, and they were cowed by his haughty assumption of superiority.

A buzz, half-frightened, ran round the circle when he was gone.

"Who would have thought it?" "I hope and trust he did not hear us?" "How savage he will be," said one and another.

"And after all we have no right to accuse him," observed the policeman.

Rokewood heard all this, and he chuckled.

"Fools," he said; "they may suspect, but they can never prove anything. Why, even if Clippenham were taken who would believe him against me? No, no; I am safe as long as I do not betray myself. We must both hasten up to London. I am sick and tired of these Cumberland fastnesses."

He went into the dining-room again, rubbing his hands cheerfully, and talking loudly to the squire and the rector.

"I am quite hungry," he said, "and I have taken the great liberty of finding my way to your kitchen, Mr. Macray, and asking for something to eat. Here it comes. Kind and prompt your servants are, sir; wish mine were the same. What is this? cold round of roast? game-pie?—oh, how excellent."

Rokewood drank ale out of a silver flagon which had escaped the robbers' hands. He talked loudly, he laughed, he overdid his part as the guilty are apt to do.

The rector stared at him in disgust and amazement. Rokewood caught the glance.

"Sir," he said; "I laugh while my heart is breaking. If I did not laugh I must cry; it is but another form of hysteria, and I have to keep up my spirits so that my niece, Lady Monkhouse, may not utterly fail and faint. She was very much attached to Norah—"

The vicar interrupted him roughly.

"I have been talking over the matter with Mr. Macray," he said; "and it is my impression that Lady Norah is not dead, but the ruffians mistook their victim, and so the young lady took the opportunity of escaping."

"Impossible!" broke forth Rokewood, furiously, for the notion of the orphan escaping, and his scheme to possess her wealth failing at the very last, was maddening to him. "How can you talk such nonsense, sir?"

"It is my calm conviction after due reflection," responded the rector, quietly. "I do not think Lady Norah was murdered."

Rokewood put down his knife and gazed with an angry and blood-thirsty expression into the fire. He remembered that the housekeeper had remarked to him that morning that Madame Diana was missing. How had the tale of the identification of the remains of the wretched Frenchwoman reached the ears of the butler and the housekeeper at that time? They had spoken as though the other bodies alone had been recognised. Heavens! Was it Norah who was missed after all?

"It is impossible, impossible," he murmured.

The rector, looking at him fixedly, had his dark suspicions of the man strengthened tenfold. It was some time before he arose to take his leave. The shadows had deepened into night by that time.

"I must beg either that you will permit me to call upon you to-morrow or the next day, Mr. Macray. You are not well, and you need strengthening in spirit, for this dreadful affair has upset your nerves. You must pray, sir, and I will pray for you."

The worthy man wrung the hand of the squire, who scarcely raised his moody head.

"Come again," he muttered, inaudibly.

When the rector was gone, Rokewood came up close to the squire, folded his arms across his chest, and stared at him fiercely.

"Well, sir," he said, "and is this the way you set about earning the ten-thousand pounds I was idiot enough to promise you? Casting innuendoes at me? sitting down before the fire, and calling yourself a murderer? Think yourself very lucky if you ever get paid, for just leaving your jewels in the way, and pretending to hear nothing when the men passed your room. Ah, Macray, your place will have to be sold up about your ears after all, I fear, unless I have a better opinion of you than I have to-night, you will betray everything. And although I have not the least dread of the law daring to attack such a person of rank as the Countess of Monkhouse, or a man so well-known and respected as her secretary and uncle, still if suspicion and rumour gets abroad, I shall not like to touch a shilling of the girls' fortunes. Do penance then, if you choose for your share in the crime—let your house come to ruin, and do you retire to the almshouse at Penniston. Perhaps your daughter may go out as a governess, and your elegant wife take in needlework, and none of it will much hurt me."

Rokewood shrugged his shoulders.

"I shall simply hand over the girl's fortune to charities, make a grand speech, write to the *Times*, get into Parliament, and snap my fingers at the world! 'What a noble-hearted man is R. Rokewood, M.P.,' the world and the press, the politicians, and the public in general, will say of me after a time."

The insolent bravado of the miscreant had its effect upon the squire.

"How can you? how can you?" he whimpered, "after a night of horror, how can you be calm, and speak with that unshaken voice. I feel as if my whole soul were drenched in blood-guiltiness. I don't like the thoughts of poverty. But oh! that poor young creature!"

"Drink brandy," said the tempter, handing the

squire a silver bottle from the table case, "and bring up your drooping courage to the sticking point."

The squire drank, his eyes blazed, the red, coarse flush returned to his cheeks, he rose up.

"More, more!" he said, holding out his tall Venetian glass towards the tempter. "I am all right now. Why should I care? The girl feels nothing now. If she had lived I must have had every acre, every chain, every cup, and coin, and jewel I possess sold or melted down before my eyes. Now I can pay off half the mortgage, and begin to pay the interest, and in time—when I have my timber grown up a bit—I will cut some, and finish off the mortgage. More brandy! Thank you."

Again he drank.

"When that pestering priest comes again to-morrow," said Rokewood, "tell him that you have got over your fit of the blues, laugh and be merry; if he lectures, questions, or suspects, show him the door; swear, shock him with oaths, profanity, and everything that is likely to wound his saintly ears. Then do not let your servants think you sad, let them have a feast in the kitchen next week, and invite the servants of your neighbours, give a fox-hunt dinner yourself in a fortnight, when the first of this has blown over, and I will send you a cheque for one-thousand pounds as earnest money. Cheer up, it's all in the way of business. A wise man never troubles himself about the whispers of conscience; he don't believe in them."

And the villain slapped the squire on the back, and burst into a roar of false merriment.

The two sat carousing late into the night, and Rokewood slept the sound sleep of the hardened criminal in a soft bed which was made up for him in one of the best rooms of the old mansion.

The next morning he left after breakfast, borrowed a horse from the squire's stable, and rode back to Cumberton. He found the countess lingering in *dis-habille* over a late breakfast. She started up, haggard and anxious, and fierce-eyed, when he entered.

"Well, well, well, what news? what news?" she asked, impatiently, "is Diana found? poor Diana was a friend of mine, and how did it happen, and why did you stay away last night, keeping me pacing my chamber from twilight till dawn, waiting for news. Tell me everything?"

Rokewood threw himself into a chair, divested his feet of his boots, and put on his slippers, folded his arms, and stared moodily into the fire, all before he gave an answer to his niece. Then he said:

"Danger and difficulty and perplexity, already beset our path. I am suspected by the Rector of Yaoworth and by the servants, of participation in this crime, as they call it,—a very ferocious sneer curled his mousted lip as he spoke—"and more than that, there is an idea abroad that the rascally Chippendale has made a cursed blunder in this business, cut up Diana and flung her into the pond, and that Norah has escaped." The last word he shot from between his lips like a curse, he gnashed his teeth, and drew his bushy brows together in an ominous knot.

The countess burst into a satanic laugh.

"Escaped?" she echoed, "if I thought that I would kill everybody who has thus conspired to cheat me—escaped, ah! wretch that you were, that you did not dash her down from that ruined tower near Grand Court."

"I was a fool," said Rokewood, "but we may be wrong; Chippendale killed two, and his comrade killed the third, in the hurry of the butchery. They were afraid to admit to us that they had slain Diana. Depend upon it all will be well. We must hurry up to London to-night with our certificate of Viola's death. We must speak of the death of Norah as an assured fact, and try and draw some of the money."

"And I shall look out for Hammond if he is not dead," muttered the countess.

"Our victims have a singular knack of escaping us," sneered Rokewood; "but now, while all these affairs perplex us, you must try and marry yourself to a man of title and fortune, and abandon all thoughts of that beggarly younger son."

(To be continued.)

THE Metropolitan Railway Company hold nine miles fifty-four chains of lines of their own, and two miles seventy-seven chains partly owned by them; together, twelve miles fifty-one chains. The capital expended on these amounts to 6,793,731*l*.

MISERABLE DEATH OF A FEMALE MISER.—On Thursday morning a widow lady of very eccentric habits, who for some time had occupied two rooms in Milton Street, Vassall Road, Brixton, was found dead in one of her apartments. The deceased, who was above seventy years of age, was of very singular habits, and for days together she was not seen by the other inmates of the house, and would not converse with any person. The landlady of the house not having heard her for several days, gave

information to a constable, and the door of the room was broken open, when she was discovered dead in bed. A few dried crusts of bread, tied up in a rag, were all the remains of food found in her apartment. Her clothing was old and wretched. A large gold watch and 112 sovereigns were found sewn up tightly in her stays. From some old letters found in her box her relatives have been communicated with. It is stated that she had a good income, arising from money in the Bank of England.

A CURE FOR SOMNAMBULISM.—Professor Pellizzario, of Florence, has hit upon a cure for somnambulism. It simply consists in winding once or twice round one's leg, on going to bed, a thin, flexible copper wire, long enough to reach the floor. Eighteen teen somnambulists, treated in this way, have been either permanently or temporarily cured. Copper wire is known to dissipate magnetic somnambulism, and this circumstance led the professor to have recourse to this strange remedy.

RANEENGUNGE COAL-FIELDS.—The Governor-General of India, having recently visited the Raneengunge coal-fields, has directed the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal to urge the East India Railway Company to greater exertions in coal traffic. Lord Mayo observed that much locomotive power was wasted by the antiquated coal waggons, which carried only seven tons for a dead weight of about five tons, and has called upon the Board of Agency to make specific proposals for transforming the old wagon stock into suitable vehicles with as little delay as possible. The charges of the company—one-fourth of a pic per maund per mile—on all coal going above Kanoo not for brick-burning purposes, have also been challenged, and a hint is thrown out that a better understanding ought to be arrived at between the railway and the Bengal Coal Company, in order that the transit rates on coal may be reduced as low as possible. In a few years the new canal from the Damoodah will effectually compete with the railway and provide cheaper coal for the Calcutta market.

THE GREAT EASTERN.—The hull of the Great Eastern has been cleaned by divers. The bottom of the ship was in a very foul state, mussels having gathered on it at some places more than a foot thick. It was found that the iron hull was very little rusted. It is estimated that 50,000 gallons of mussels and rubbish were removed from the bottom beneath the water line. On Wednesday upwards of 1,700 miles of the Anglo-Indian cable had been coiled on board in the iron tanks. The filling of the main tank was completed, and the tank itself fastened down on Tuesday. It contains about 1,100 miles of line. The after-tank at present contains over 600 miles, and the men are now busily engaged in completing this part of the work, after which the fore tank will be taken in hand, and the remainder of the cable coiled away. The tests which daily pass through the wire in the tanks prove the cable to be in excellent condition. The utmost exertions are being used to get the ship ready.

AN AWKWARD DETENTION.—The way in which "they do things better in France" was curiously illustrated recently by an incident that occurred to an American gentleman travelling in that country. In journeying from Paris to Boulogne en route to London, he got into one of the second-class compartments, smoked alone, fell asleep, and when he awoke found that the carriage had been shunted at Criel, and was standing in the darkness on a siding. His friends and luggage had gone on to Boulogne, he was left with a second-class ticket to London, but with no money, and was told peremptorily that he could not go by the next express train unless first-class fare was paid. He remonstrated, of course, and probably in a vigorous manner, gave his name and address, and eventually attempted to get into the express train when it came up. He was immediately seized by the officials, who, reinforced by gendarmes, dragged off the unlucky American, locked him in a cold and wretched cell for 48 hours, and fed him sparingly on bread and water. He was refused the means of writing to his friends, or to the Minister, and was eventually handcuffed, marched several miles, surrounded by a posse of gendarmes, and brought before the juge d'instruction of the district, who decided that there was no case, and that the prisoner must be discharged immediately.

RELICS OF FRANKLIN.—I could have gathered great quantities—a very great variety—of relics of Sir John Franklin's expedition, for they are now possessed by natives all over the Arctic regions that I visited or heard of—from Pond's Bay to Mackenzie River. As it was I had to be satisfied with taking upon our sledges about 125 pounds total weight of relics from natives about King William's Land. Some of those I will enumerate: 1st. a portion of one side (several planks and ribs fast together) of a boat, clincher-built and copper-fastened. This part of a boat is of the one found by McClintock's party. 2nd. A small oak sledge runner, reduced from the sledge on

which the boat rested. 3rd. Part of the mast of the North-west Passage ship. 4th. Chronometer box, with its number, name of the maker, and the Queen's broad arrow engraved upon it. 5th. Two long heavy sheets of copper, 3in. and 4in. wide, with counter-sunk holes for screw nails. On these sheets, as well as on most everything else that came from the North-west Passage ship, are numerous stamps of the Queen's broad arrow. 6th. Mahogany writing-desk, elaborately finished and bound in brass. 7th. Many pieces of silver plate—forks and spoons—bearing crests and initials of the owners. 8th. Parts of watches. 9th. Knives, and very many other things, all of which you, Mr. Grinnell, and others interested in the fate of the Franklin expedition, will take a sad interest in inspecting on their arrival in the States.—*Capt. C. F. Hall.*

SCOTTISH SURNAMES.

The clanship of Scotland has tended to limit the number of surnames in that country. A hundred and fifty surnames represent nearly half the entire three millions of population. First in number in Scotland, as in England, stand the cosmopolitan Smiths; but Jones, the name which occupies the second place in England, is "nowhere" in Scotland. McDonald is second in Scotland; and then follow Brown, Thomson, Robertson, Stewart, Campbell, Wilson, and Anderson. Dr. Stark, of the Registry-office, has ascertained that the registers of births in 1863 show these to be the nine strongest surnames in Scotland, and the same result was obtained on a former occasion from an examination of the registers of births, deaths, and marriages in 1855, 1856, and 1858. Scott is the tenth name upon the birth register of 1863, followed by Miller, McKenzie, Reid, Ross, McKay, Johnston, Murray, Clark, Paterson, Young, the spelling sometimes varying a little in different families.

In the list obtained from the registers of 1855, 1856, and 1858 Fraser and Maclean had place among the first twenty, and Clark and Young were a little lower on the roll. Notwithstanding the large modern accession of Irish and other immigrants, several Scottish surnames still very decidedly predominate in certain parts of the country. The McDonalds are very strong in Inverness, and also, indeed, in Ross and Cromarty; but the McKenzies outnumber them in Ross and Cromarty. The McKays preponderate in Caithness and Sunderland; the McLeods in Ross and Cromarty; the McLeans are pretty generally divided among the three counties of Argyll, Inverness, and Ross and Cromarty. Nearly one-third of the McIntosh births occur in Inverness, Elgin, Nairn, and Banff; the most numerous section of the McGregors is in Perthshire, where, also, the Stewarts are strongest; and the Robertsons there and in Forfar.

The Campbells are strong in Argyll, and there are upwards of 6,000 of them in Glasgow. The Hamiltons are also numerous in Glasgow, and throughout Lanarkshire; the Frasers in Inverness; the Grants in Elgin, Nairn, Banff, and Inverness; the Kerrs in Renfrew and Ayr; the Camerons in Ayr; the Camerons in Argyll, Inverness, and Perth; the Scotts in Roxburgh, Selkirk, and Forfar; Ross in Ross and Cromarty. In proportion to population there are much fewer surnames in Scotland than in England; the total number is about 6,800. The most usual Christian names in Scotland are John and James for men, Margaret and Mary for women.

In the French cheese-making districts the proprietors bring each his daily contribution of milk to a common dairy, and each contribution being duly registered, the contributors receive ultimately an amount of cheese in proportion to the milk that each has supplied.

TOURISTS IN FRANCE, weary of going to and fro on the old track between Dan and Bersheba, are likely to have a new delight. The old and famous Chateau de Pierrefonds has been so thoroughly restored that nothing of its old feudal and majestic uncomfatableness has been omitted. It will be the favourite residence of the Imperial family. The Empress now travels incognito as "La Comtesse de Pierrefonds."

INDIAN UGLINESS.—It seems to be the fashion amongst many travellers to extol the beauty of savage races; to paint glowing pictures of young Indian squaws, and almost to rave about Hottentot Venuses. I have seen some fine races of Indians, and men, as well as women, of perfect symmetry; but beauty I consider quite out of the question. The faces of all I met, who have passed their childhood, were completely devoid of any single expression which could call forth other feelings than those of curiosity or disgust, until I encountered the *Uptas of Sonora*.—*By William A. Bell, M.A.*

SOLDIERS' ACCOUTREMENTS.—It appears from the records of the Royal Victoria Hospital that during the six years ending March 10, 1869, 22,625 invalid sol-

diers have been admitted to Netley from abroad, and most of them from India. Of these 1,635 were sent there as unfit for duty from disease of the heart. There is no question but that this prevalence of heart disease is caused by the present fashion of accoutrement. Professor Maclean doubts whether the form of heart disease to which soldiers are liable can ever really be cured. He says: "I have kept young men under observation for months under the most favourable circumstances as regards diet, dress, and medicine, but on causing them to resume their ordinary dress and accoutrements, or to walk quietly about the hospital corridors, distressing palpitations occurred, making further exertion impossible." It is satisfactory to feel that this kind of indirect murder is not to go on. The Pack Committee are supposed to have solved both the mechanical and physiological problems committed to their consideration. So long as it is thought necessary to make the soldier carry what he is now required to do it would be impossible to dispose of it to more advantage; but as the new system of accoutring the soldier can only be introduced gradually into the service, it will be some time before any marked diminution in the number of cases of heart disease can be expected. In other words, we shall continue until it suits our convenience to wheedle men into a compulsory service, and then shorten or destroy their lives because they have been foolish enough not to calculate the effects of our folly. It is well for us sometimes, when we are inclined to venerate our wisdom and that of our ancestors, to remember how many valuable lives, which it was not only our duty but also to our advantage to preserve, we have obstinately destroyed. Is it quite impossible to shorten the deadly effects of all this nonsense? Need we sacrifice one additional British soldier to the memory of our great grandfathers?

FACETIE.

LE FOLLY.—Why should we look to medical men to put down the eccentricities of Fashion? Because they can best administer Clo-reform.—*Fun.*

HURRAH! SO IT OUGHT.—It is believed that the proposition which has been made for a "Temple Bar" in the Cathedral City of Exeter, will end in utter failure.—*Punch.*

NATURAL ENOUGH.—A telegram from Canada reports that Prince Arthur has gone to Ottawa for otter and beaver hunting. It is, of course, natural that if H.R.H. wishes for sport, he should go *Otter-way*.—*Judy.*

SINGLE AND MARRIED GALLANTRY.
Gallant Swell (pointing to figure in distance): "My dear sir, why do you not offer that lady a portion of your umbrella?"

Middle-aged Gent: "Aw! Oh, she's only my wife!"—*Will-o'-the-Wisp.*

If the report is to be believed, it would appear that the Board of Works will soon improve that part of the City which lies nearest to the Mansion House. It is even whispered (in some quarters) that, when the Commissioners get to the Poultry, we may expect to see a *fowl*.—*Tomahawk.*

A QUOTATION IN SEASON.—At this time of year when Pig-bait, who is fond both of pork and poetry, sees the strings of fresh sausages hanging up in the shops, he annually tells his friends that they remind him of what Milton says "of linked sweetness long drawn out."—*Punch.*

SO IT SINGS.—The foot-and-mouth disease has broken out badly at Leeds. Mr. Sims Reeves having been offended in the course of a musical entertainment, struck one singer and kicked another, and was charged with assault, but compromised the case—it is said with another *tenner*. Mr. Reeves never sings badly, but for once he has been forced to *sing small*.—*Judy.*

WANTED TO KNOW.—Two cases of forgery have recently come before the Lord Mayor. Clement Harwood defrauds his employers of 15,000*l*. Mr. Lawrence, remarking that one must be merciful as well as just, allows the charge to be withdrawn. Albert Buchler cheats his employers out of 1,857*l*; but he is committed for trial. Have the representatives of Mercy and Justice got mixed up in the Lord Mayor's mind, that he puts the square goddess in the round hole?—*Judy.*

MOHAMMED NO BOTTLE-STOPPER.—The delusion as to Mohammed's temperance is dispelled by the writer of a most remarkable article in the new number of the *Quarterly*—an article to be read, marked, and learned for other seasons. The author states that the prophet was supposed to have wrought miracles by the aid of Jin (*gic*) and that his revelations were made in presence of the Negus of Abyssinia.—*Punch.*

WONDERS NEVER CEASE.—The ingenuity of modern invention appears to be boundless. Lovers of walnuts and filberts will be glad to hear that in seasons of scarcity they are not likely to be deprived of

these favourite additions to the dessert-table, there now being a "nut-making machine!" A friend of ours wishes some one would bring out a machine for peeling walnuts.—*Punch.*

BENEFIT OF CLERGY.—"What a shame," said an old lady to her husband (a staunch Liberal) "that Captain Saxby should be allowed, with his sons and his moons, to go on so! It is a wonder he had not gone and drowned us all upon the 7th and 8th." "So he would, my dear, so he would, if it had not been for Gladstone. Don't you know he prevented it by filling all the vacant *Sees* at that time!"—*Will-o'-the-Wisp.*

HIS OPINION.—An anecdote is related with reference to a picture which obtained much notice at the Academy this year. It represented a general on horseback, bareheaded, with his hand resting on the pommel of his sword. When the picture was completed, the artist took it to the general, and asked his opinion of it. The gallant soldier looked at it attentively for several minutes, and then said: "My opinion? I should just like to know what you have done with my hat!"

RANDOLPH'S WITTICISMS.—John Randolph was one of the most sarcastic men that ever lived. One time a young man attempted to make his acquaintance. He obtained an introduction, and among the first remarks, said: "I passed by your house lately, Mr. Randolph." "I hope you always will," was the reply. Another one twitted him with his "want of education." "The gentleman reminds me," said Randolph in reply, "of the lands about the head waters of the Montgomery, which are poor by nature, and cultivation has ruined them!"

BAOS OF MYSTERY.

A SHEFFIELD sausage-maker has been sentenced to three months' hard labour for going the whole hog in pork-sausages with decayed horse-flesh. When we think of the fatal diseases that might have sprung from a string of sausages, we honour the bench that ridded—*as Shakespeare meant to say*—"Sheffield of this mortal coil."

[N.B. Parties acquainted with Greek will be charged extra for this number, in consideration of their getting an extra joke out of *koila*.—*Fun.*]

A CONCLUSIVE REASON.

"Stranger, will you try a hand with us at poker?" "Thank you, gentlemen, but there are seventeen reasons why I cannot accommodate you just now."

"Seventeen reasons for not playing cards! Pray, what are they?"

"Why, the first is, I haven't any money."

"Stop! that's enough; never mind the other sixteen."

FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE POOR.

A lot of minstrels started out on a "tour," recently. They went to a town not far away, and advertised to give a performance for "the benefit of the poor, tickets reduced to two-pence." The hall was crammed full.

The next morning a committee for the poor called upon the treasurer of the concern for the amount said benefit had netted. The treasurer expressed astonishment at the demand.

"I thought," said the chairman of the committee, "you advertised this concert for the benefit of the poor?"

Replied the treasurer: "Didn't we put tickets down to two-pence, so that the poor could all come?" The committee vanished.

The following slanderous paragraph goes unrebuked. A wag has invented a new telegraph. He proposes to place a line of women fifty steps apart, and commit the news to the first of them as a secret.

The boy who, when asked to what trade he would wish to be brought up, replied, "I will be a trustee, because ever since papa has been a trustee we have had pudding at dinner," was a wise child in his generation. The greatest successes now-a-days are those connected with the dealing with other people's money.

A CARRIAGE SCENE.

"I say, Guard, do you know who that good-looking lady is there with a book?"

"Yes, I've seen her a few minutes."

"By Jove! she's splendid."

"Yes, I think she is."

"I'd like to occupy that seat with her."

"Why don't you ask her?"

"I did not know but it would be out of order."

"It would not be if she was willing to have you occupy it. Of course you claim to be a gentleman."

"Oh! certainly. If you are acquainted with her, give me an introduction; that is, if you have no objections."

"Certainly not."

"How far is she going, do you know?"

"Rochester, I believe."

Fixing his hair, moustache, and whiskers in becoming style, he followed the conductor, who on

reaching the seat where the lady sat, said, with a peculiar twinkle in his eye:

"My wife, Mr. —, of London who assures me he will die before reaching Brighton if he does not form your acquaintance."

The gentleman stammered, stuttered, grew red in the face, faltered out some excuse, and returned to his seat, leaving the lady in company with her husband to enjoy the joke.

STATISTICS.

THE COAL TRAFFIC FROM YORKSHIRE DURING THE YEAR 1868.—The quantities sent from the following stations are set down as those embraced under the head of Yorkshire: Penistone, 482 tons; Silkstone, 63,167 tons; Dodworth, 19,561 tons; Barnsley, 65,771 tons; Thurgoland, 16,745 tons; Sheffield, 2,298 tons; Woodhouse, 253,007 tons. The quantities carried from the South Yorkshire district were as follows: Keadby, 272,600 tons; Hexthorpe, 686,975 tons; Mexborough, 158,049 tons; Wath, 145 tons; Elsecar, 48,192 tons; Wombwell, 60,483 tons; Mossborough, 77,069 tons; Ardsley, 10,202 tons; Barnsley, 3,718 tons; Birdwell, 90,972 tons; Westwood, 11,256 tons; Chapeltown, 55,755 tons; Grange Lane, 8,898 tons; Broughton Lane, 1,404 tons. There has been also forwarded by the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire, at Mexborough, 130,416 tons. Whilst that company received from the Midland at that place 10,480 tons, the London and North-Western carried from Yorkshire during the year 196,732 tons. The Great Northern carried 521,739 tons from South Yorkshire, and 400,788 tons from the West Riding. The Midland carried over its own system 1,136,539 tons, whilst during the year that company received from Yorkshire by means of other lines 130,438 tons. The Aire and Calder Navigation, whose canal runs through Yorkshire, carried to coast 557,899 tons during the year.

AUSTRALASIAN GOLD.—The imports of Australasian gold into the United Kingdom in the eight months ending August 31 this year amounted to 5,151,549*l.*, as compared with 4,361,243*l.* in the corresponding period of 1868, and 3,277,615*l.* in the corresponding period of 1867. The amount of the gold brought down by escort in the province of Otago, New Zealand, in the first six months of this year was 71,214*oz.*, as compared with 71,618*oz.* in the first six months of 1868. It is stated that there is a prospect of a valuable goldfield being found in the Marehenua district about forty miles from Oamaru, in the province of Otago. Mr. Warden Robinson has been directed to visit the workings, and report upon them to the Provincial Government. About one hundred men were at work in the locality at the last dates, some good specimens of auriferous quartz had been found, and as the district adjoins that of Mount Ida, it is expected that a similar formation will be found to exist over a wide extent of country. There are now eighty-seven companies formed in connection with the gold mining of the Thames fields, in the province of Auckland, New Zealand. These eighty-seven companies had raised between them capital to the amount of 1,270,201*l.* A large demand for skilled mining labour is stated to prevail on the Thames fields, which are extraordinarily rich.

GEMS.

RECLUSINESS has its uses. Men, like trees, must stand far apart to grow large.

SHOW may easily be purchased; but happiness is a home-made article.

SORROW can never wholly fill the heart that is occupied with others' welfare. Constant melancholy is rebellion.

IT is no disgrace not to be able to do everything, but to undertake, or pretend to do, what you are not made for, is not only shameful, but extremely troublesome and vexatious.

THERE are calumnies that kill women, but do only a slight injury to men, as certain reptiles kill with poison in the hot months, and only wound in the cold ones.

THERE is this difference between those two temporal blessings, health and money; money is the most envied, but the least enjoyed; health is the most enjoyed, but the least envied.

HAVE frank explanations with friends in cases of affronts. They sometimes save a perishing friendship; but secret discontent and mistrust always end badly.

PETER THE GREAT AT SPA.—"I found him in a tent. I offered him a bowl of figs and strawberries from my garden. He flung himself on them, and in a second had devoured twelve figs and about six pounds of strawberries. Next day I dined with his

Majesty. The table was suited to hold eight covers, but they had contrived to fit in twelve. The Czar presided in a nightcap, with his throat bare, and without his cravat. We all sat down the sides, but at about half-a-foot distance from the table. Two soldiers handed round a dish in which there was literally nothing, but everyone had beside him an earthenware dish, in which there was soup and a morsel of meat. Still, the food was thus so far off that we had to stretch out our arms to get at it. Anyone who wished for more broth helped himself, *sans façon*, to his neighbour's, as his Majesty did to his Chancellor's. The Admiral of the Galley, who sat facing the Czar, had no appetite, and only bit his nails. Suddenly came a man who threw six bottles on the table as if he were playing bowls, not setting them down. The Czar took one and gave a glass to each guest. The Chancellor, seeing that I was taking my food without salt—the only salt-cellar being at the other end—said, graciously, 'Sir, if you want salt, you must help yourself.' So I, not wishing to be singular, thrust my arm out past the Czar, and took as much as would do me for dinner. By this time nearly all the earthenware bowls had been upset over the cloth, and so had a good deal of the wine, which had been badly corked. Then came the second course. A soldier passing by the kitchen was given a dish to take up, and as he entered shook his head to get his hat off, his hands being full; but the Czar told him not to mind. This course consisted of veal and four fowls. His Majesty, seeing that one of the fowls was larger than its fellows, took it up in his hand, rubbed it under his nose, and making a sign to me that it was good, flung it on my plate. It slipped down from one end of the table to the other, *sans mauvaise rencontre*, since it had the course clear, and the cloth was well greased. The dessert was a plate containing three Spa biscuits."

THE DAY LILY.

A fragrant life awung light between
The golden points of eve and morn,
Just long enough to make us glad
That anything so fair was born—
Glad that so bright a fane was built,
With dainty walls and banner white,
Sorry to know the door must shut
Under the fingers of the night.

The humming bird peers in its hall,
Dusting with jewelled wing
The silver pennon, as he goes
With careless, arrowyaving.
The bee goes musing in its heart,
And bears out dusty gold;
The lady-bird its shelter seeks,
From evening's shadow cold.

While lovingly above it bends
A child with wistful eyes,
So fair, they seem to need no change
To make them fit for Paradise.
A little hand, too thin and pale
To hold life's cable tight,
Trembles along its tapestry
That closes with the night.

And I must watch the lily fade,
Helpless the night to stay,
Shall I be sorrowful or glad
For one gift-brightened day?
Ah, me! above the closing door
I'll breathe no sigh of sorrow;
For memory can never fade,
As lilies will, to-morrow.

And better 'tis to feel and know
What gifts the Lord can leave
To gladden us a little while,
Than all untoward grievance.
'Tis better that the lily lived
One radiant, fragrant day;
Better the blessed life was lent,
Though brief and sweet its stay.

E. L.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE Duke d'Albuquerque, better known as the Duke de Sesto, has returned to Paris with his wife, the widow of the Duke de Morny.

It is stated that it is proposed to convert the Deptford Dockyard into a fish-market, in lieu of Billingsgate, the lease of which will shortly expire.

Two enormous blocks of marble have arrived in St Petersburg, each weighing 72,000*lbs.* They will form the pedestal to the statue of the Empress Catherine II.

TURNING CUT STRAW INTO HAY.—A method of using cut straw is adopted in Cambridgeshire and adjoining counties, which is worthy the notice of

agriculturists elsewhere, as it is stated that by means of it the value of the straw as food is greatly increased. The method pursued in the counties adverted to is this:—Unless the straw can be cut as it is threshed, take it as soon after as convenient (before it has been exposed to rain), and cut it fine, sifting out all the imperfectly cut, and having covered the floor of a capacious room—say the mough of a barn—about a foot thick with it, lay thereon, in two or three heaps—say six or eight bushels in each—chopped tares, clover, grass, nettles, or any succulent that will ferment (on these some parties pour a few gallons of boiling water), and cover them immediately with the cut straw, which must be well trodden down as the process of filling proceeds, during which salt, in the proportion of about a quarter of a cwt. to a ton of chaff, may be sprinkled in. The consolidation must be strictly attended to, and it is best to have a number of boys with a man constantly and slowly traversing the mass as it rises, so that the chaff may, if possible, be compressed as tightly as hops in a pocket. In the course of a few days fermentation will set in, and probably continue for three or four weeks; the degree of heat may be ascertained by thrusting an iron rod to the centre of the mass; after it has subsided the chaff will have acquired the scent of hay, and will keep for any length of time. In some cases where clover or other green vegetables are not available, only salt is added, and some use half a cwt. of salt to a ton of chaff. In treading the mass, a board 15 inches long, and 6 or 7 in width, is laced on the foot. Mr. Robert Maynard, a manufacturer of agricultural implements, of the Whittlesford Works, near Cambridge, has invented a special sifting chaff engine, adapted for the purpose of cutting and sifting the chaff, and which can be attached to horse works, or worked by any portable steam engine.

MERITS OF PISTOLS.—A somewhat new experiment was tried a few days ago at Woolwich, in the shape of a sort of semi-official trial of the respective merits of pistols to be used on campaign. The competitors were two only in number, the Adams breech-loader and the "converted" Colt, both of them, we need hardly say, revolvers. The points to be tested were three—accuracy, penetration, and rapidity. The Adams had the best of the trial throughout, though not sufficiently so for it to be quite conclusive. It fired twenty-four shots in two minutes and a half at thirty yards range, with an average distance of 5.62 inches from the centre, and an average penetration of somewhat more than three half-inch boards of dry elm placed an inch apart. Now this is really in its way an admirable performance, of which we by no means mean to deny the substantial merit; but we should like some information on a fourth point, which cannot be quite so readily ascertained by experiments at Woolwich. This point is—which of the two would most rapidly and most effectually disable an enemy at short range, say at five or six yards? After all it is at such distances that pistols have to do the most important service in battle, and we cannot help thinking that neither of the contending pistols is altogether perfect in this respect. It is no great satisfaction to know that you have mortally wounded your enemy in more places than one, if he has life enough left to take two or three shots at you in return, and to carry you with him to the happy hunting-grounds. What is really wanted by a cavalry soldier or an infantry officer is a weapon which will drop a foe dead in his tracks at short range, and this will best be found where a large bullet is employed. A New Orleans rowdy should know as well as anyone what pistol is best and quickest at taking away the life of an enemy who has his own pistol ready, and his pockets hold a brace or more of Derringers, short smooth bores, with a two-inch barrel and a half-ounce ball. A very convenient double-barrelled breech-loader of this kind has been made. The barrels lie one above the other, and not side by side, as in a double-barrelled, and turn on a pivot lying between them; there is but one hammer and the second barrel is turned upwards by the hand after the discharge of the first; the loading and cleaning are very fast and simple. This pistol is cheaper, shorter, lighter, much narrower, more easily carried, and more effective at short ranges than any small bore; at the same time it is slower after the first shot, only holds two charges instead of five or six, and is comparatively useless at long ranges. We do not say that it is on the whole superior or even equal to the Adams, but we hope that the Woolwich authorities will not decide on recommending any pistol for general use in the service till they have considered the question of the best weapon from at least one other point of view. It is practically impossible to get any pistol which shall be at the same time convenient, rapid, and deadly beyond others at all ranges, and it would be very desirable that we should know on which of these functions most stress ought to be laid before any final selection is made.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

T. F. T. was replied to in due course.
C. WOODROFFE.—Received, with thanks.
M. H.—The Tripoli is the name of the steamship which left Liverpool for New York on the 27th September. The destination of the vessel was Boston, as well as New York.

R. SANDS.—We have attentively perused your productions, and are sorry to be compelled to disappoint your expectations. We are afraid that you will grudge the time it may take to realise the object of your desire.

ASPIRANS.—If a young man wishes to have handsome moustache he must not shave, or, if he has commenced, leave off the practice. Nipping the ends once or twice a week will make the appendage grow bushy and silky.

S. A. H.—We do not think it possible for your daughter to be able to receive a good musical education gratuitously, but apply on her behalf at the Royal Academy of Music, and if that fail, advertise her natural gift in a leading morning newspaper.

T. P. SARGENT.—1. Clerks in the Metropolitan Post Office have to pass an examination in handwriting, orthography, and arithmetic, including reduction, rule of three, and practice. The limit of age is from eighteen to twenty-five. 2. Either pronunciation is current. 3. Leadon pipes for water were in use as far back as the year 1250. 4. Your handwriting will do.

FLORENCE.—Hair may be darkened by using as a wash scum leaves, or the skins of walnuts, or the skins of beans boiled in a cheap red wine. Frequent washings are required. You must take care that you do not catch cold. Avoid the use of a leaden comb which is often recommended; it is injurious to the health, and sometimes fatal.

J. J.—You can have an agreement drawn up, stating that you let the house and furniture to your father at so much a week. This will secure your furniture to you as against your father's ordinary creditors. If default, however, be made in the payment of the rent and taxes, due on account of the premises, the furniture would inevitably be taken upon a distress warrant.

JANE S.—You must attend to the small courtesies of life. A person may have virtue, capacity, and good conduct, and yet be inopportune. The manners which are neglected as small things are often those which decide men and women for or against you, and a slight attention to them would have prevented their mean opinion of you.

NELLY.—A small spoonful of sulphur taken in milk before breakfast often serves to make the skin clear; but the best cosmetics, as we have often said, are proper diet, combined with good air and exercise. It is vain to think that you can necessarily make your physical appearance assume the precise tint of colour your fancy may desire. The All-Wise had made us of different hues, shapes, and constitutions.

BETA.—The true system of the universe was known to the ancients. Pythagoras, who lived five hundred years before Christ, was undoubtedly acquainted with the present doctrine of the planetary motions. He and his disciples not only taught that the earth had a diurnal motion on its own axis, and actually revolved with other planets round the sun, but such an account of the comets as agrees with modern discoveries.

G. F. B. (Sheffield).—The substance of our first reply to you was, that we were unable to furnish you with precise information such as you required concerning the lady's ancestors, and that we could not tell where you could get the certificate of a marriage solemnised so very many years ago. We further said that we thought such a certificate, even if obtained, would not help you to substantiate your idea, and that from your own statement, in our judgment, you had no claim.

A POOR MAN.—The operations of the Society for Promoting Emigration are in abeyance for the present, their funds being exhausted. You can, however, watch for their re-commencement, and state your case to the secretary. What has been your occupation? What is your age? What testimonials as to character can you give? It is necessary that you should reply to all such questions. If you can answer satisfactorily, it appears to us that with some industry you could at once enlist the sympathies either of the overseers or the clergyman of your parish, who might be induced to tell you where you could get aid to seek other fortunes in another land.

CRUEL BIRD.—The specifics against land-scurvy consist of plain nourishing diet, with plenty of vegetables, and the administration of moderate quantities of carbonate of soda to the patient in order to correct the acidity of stomach by which scurvy is often produced. Stimulants, excitements, anxiety, and care should be avoided.

A gentle laxative medicine such as rhubarb and magnesia should be taken when necessary. The temperature of the body should always be kept warm and comfortable, and moderate perspiration encouraged. Leave off the uncooked rice.

O. P.—It is absurd to attribute the foundation of London to Brutus, a nephew of Eneas. Nothing has been more common than to attribute the foundation of cities to extraordinary and supernatural causes. When the horse's head was discovered in digging the foundation of Carthage, there is no doubt the finding of this "omen" facilitated the building of the city. The owl had, perhaps, as great an effect on the building of Athens. Troy was said to have arisen from the efforts of divine architects. Paris, as is well known, had originally a ship for a symbol, derived from its titular goddess, Isis, who was adored, even among the Sueti, under the figure of a ship.

E. D. K. (Belfast).—To take away the desire for strong drink is a task the success of which greatly depends upon a distinct effort of the person afflicted with that desire. Remedial physical means are, however, sometimes successfully used, and of all those means none have such power as the ordinary meals of life, and the usual comforts of home administered to the sufferer by the thoughtful care and skilful hand of a good woman, possessed of a loving heart. She should never upbraid, should never hint at the disease, but with all her tact and patience should do her best to increase the positive attractions of the home of him whose lot it is in her fate to share. This is sometimes a superhuman task, the difficulties being increased by the ruinous expenditure entailed by the bad habit, yet goodness, united to skilful nursing is of more avail than any medicine or restraints. The victim of strong drink has scarcely any hope beyond that which is to be found in the power of someone's tender love for him. His will must be acted upon through his affections.

BEAUTY AND CHILDHOOD.

Beauty is on the tremble of these toes.

While south winds woo them in their lonely wild,
And power is throne on yonder azure sea,
But alone hast joy, my glorious child.

To thee alone, the earth

Is drunk with sunshine, flowers, and mirth,
While through her far continuous plains
The rivers her rejoicing roll.

As if they warmed her swelling veins,
And she possessed a living soul.

Go forth! go forth! thou small, unthoughtful one!

Through boughs and wood, and by the bright broad seas

Live whilst thou may, a courtier of the sun;

Let joy alone thy guardian angel be.

Why shouldst thou list to aught like me?

Ah, soon enough the cloud is over us wrought,

When left the Eden of our childhood's thought.

The sword is set, the world is dearly bought.

With manhood Thought appears, and Sorrow stands by

Thought. W. B. W.

ALICE DAY.—The first and most important quality of a woman is gentleness. Made to obey a being so imperfect as man, often full of vices, and often full of faults, she ought early to learn to suffer even injustice, and to bear wrong from a husband without complaining. It is not for his sake; it is for her own that she ought to be gentle. The ill-temper and obstinacy of women never do anything else than augment their ills and the bad conduct of their husbands—men feel that it is not with these arms they ought to be overcome. Heaven did not make women insinuating and persuasive that they might be powerful; it did not make them feeble that they might be imperious; it did not give them a voice so soft that they might rail; it did not give them features so delicate that they might disfigure them by rage. When they are angry they forget themselves. They have often reason to complain; but they are always wrong in sousing. Each ought to maintain the character of the respective sex. A husband too mild may render a wife presuming; but at least, if a man be not a monster, the gentleness of woman will pacify him and triumph over him sooner or later. The empire of woman is an empire of softness, of address, of compliance; her commands are caresses, her menaces tears.

A. M.—Englishwomen, in general, do not wear enough of woollen garments. The fashions just now happen to favour their making a somewhat more bulky appearance than was admissible a few years ago; but fashion is a fickle dame, and may quickly turn round and demand the scanty filmy vestures, which a few years back were undoubtedly the cause of many deaths by impurement. Therefore, it is well to take the opportunity of giving a word of caution. We sometimes laugh at the figures of Dutchwomen in pictures, and a clumsy Englishwoman is often spoken of in ridicule as "square, Dutch built." But it is worth notice, that although the Dutch are no strangers either to damp situations or severe frosts, yet coughs, colds, and consumptions are rare among them; alas! they are not rare in England. We cannot personally vouch for the fact, but have met with the statement in a medical work of some celebrity, that the Dutchwomen wear, at least, half a dozen woollen petticoats, while many Englishwomen never think of exceeding one of flannel, and one of calico above it; and to this is, in a great measure, ascribed the difference in point of health. Certain it is, that plenty of warmth about the loins and limbs is greatly conducive to health, and it is a pity that health should be sacrificed to the caprices of fashion.

AGRICOLA.—We are not aware that any such schools exist in England. The plan followed here is to place the youth under the care of an experienced farmer, as a sort of apprentice. It is usual, also, to let him see a variety of soils, in order that he may study the different methods of farming, and other matters connected with the land and its cultivation. For instance, we know a lad of moderate expectations, and belonging to one of the southern counties, who has been sent for a time to Scotland, in order that in addition to the science of draining, manuring, &c., he may gain some practical knowledge about sheep. A great deal depends upon the boy's taste, disposition, and constitution. We should guard against anything approaching to a solitary life as much as possible.

sible, and accordingly so conduct his training that he should rub against his fellows a good deal. Then we should encourage the appropriation of the interest of the money towards that kind of education which, after anxious consideration, we should judge would be most beneficial, always taking care that real training was being undergone, and that nothing like habits of idleness were contracted. After he has gained the experience of some eight-and-twenty years, it is time to think of the re-investment of his capital. Abstractedly, we dislike the idea of his receiving the income to which you refer to live upon the farm, say at twenty-one years of age, which is the prospect you place before us.

C. C. S.—Both scarlatina and typhus are epidemic; but to ward off these horrible diseases great care should be bestowed on the diet and clothing. The best code of diet, under circumstances of exposure to disease, is that most conducive to general health; and, supposing the habitual practice to be good, the less deviation from it the better. Apprehended danger should arouse people to consider their general habits, and rectify what is imprudent; it should excite more than ordinary caution in the use of things that are questionable; but it need not induce a change where all was right before. The following hints are worthy of notice, both in general and special application: The diet should be rather solid than liquid. Large quantities of warm liquid at all times tend to weaken the powers of digestion, to spoil the appetite for wholesome food, to make the person feeble and nervous, and so lay him open to any disease that happens to be lurking in the air. Working men and their wives will do well to remember this, and take more bread and butter (or other solid food) and less tea and coffee. This hint applies to temperate people, as to those who use themselves to put a little spirit into their tea to "keeping it from raking," it can only be said that they indulge in a most injurious habit, one for which there is no real excuse. A due mixture of animal and vegetable food is better than either exclusively. Of meats, mutton and beef are preferable to veal, lamb, and pork. If the latter meats are used at all, special care should be taken that they should be thoroughly done. Meat that is at all tainted should be especially avoided at all times. Fresh meat is more digestible and nutritious than when salted. Fish is less digestible and less nutritious than butcher's meat and poultry, and if it be not perfectly fresh, is one of the things most apt to occasion bowel complaints.

ROSE BUD, nineteen, tall, fair complexion, and fond of music. Respondent must be dark, tall, and good looking; a tradesman preferred.

J. N. (a tradesman's daughter), twenty-two, 5ft. 4in., dark brown hair, and fair complexion. Respondent must be about thirty, rather tall, and kind.

LOUISE CHEVALIER, twenty-two, medium height, blue eyes, brown hair, and respectfully connected. Respondent must be a tall, fine looking soldier, in a cavalry regiment. A musician preferred.

A. C., nineteen, tall, dark, domesticated; a good pianist. Will be entitled to 200l. a-year after marriage. Respondent must be of the medium height, brown eyes, auburn hair, loving, and fond of home.

DAISY, twenty-one, medium height, dark eyes and hair, fair complexion, and loving disposition. Respondent must be tall, dark, and good looking. A tradesman preferred.

BLUSH ROSE and WILD ROSE (friends).—"Blush Rose," twenty, medium height, dark auburn hair, hazel eyes, and domesticated. "Wild Rose," seventeen, medium height, dark, wavy hair, blue eyes, domesticated, and accomplished; will have money when of age. Respondents must be dark and fond of home; clerks preferred.

TULIP, medium height, fair complexion, and good tempered. Respondent must be tall, dark, and good looking; a tradesman preferred.

ALICE M., nineteen, medium height, dark hair and eyes, fond of home and music. Respondent must be about twenty-two, respectable, industrious, and rather tall.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

JANE is responded to by—"T. B." twenty, dark, bushy whiskers and moustache, and holds a good position in the navy.

POLLY by—"G. T." twenty-two, tall, dark, and in a good position.

HOPS by—"E. C. D." who, by birth a Frenchman, is well acquainted with England and the English. He is thirty-three, medium height, brown hair, chestnut eyes, and is fond of music. He is engaged in a responsible position at Paris.

BESSIE W. by—"W. J. R." twenty-three, dark, affectionate, fond of home, and a sailor; and—"Jack" (a sailor), 5ft. 8in., dark eyes and hair. Wishes to exchange wives.

FANNY FERN by—"H. C." twenty-four, nearly 5ft., dark, educated, and heir to 3,000l.—"H. R." twenty-one, 5ft. minus half-an-inch, fair, and a clerk with 150l. per annum and good prospects.—"H. G. T." (a banker's clerk), 5ft. 11in.; and—"Harry," 5ft. 9in., dark hair and eyes, and has a government appointment, value 140l. per annum, with good prospects. Wishes to exchange careers.

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